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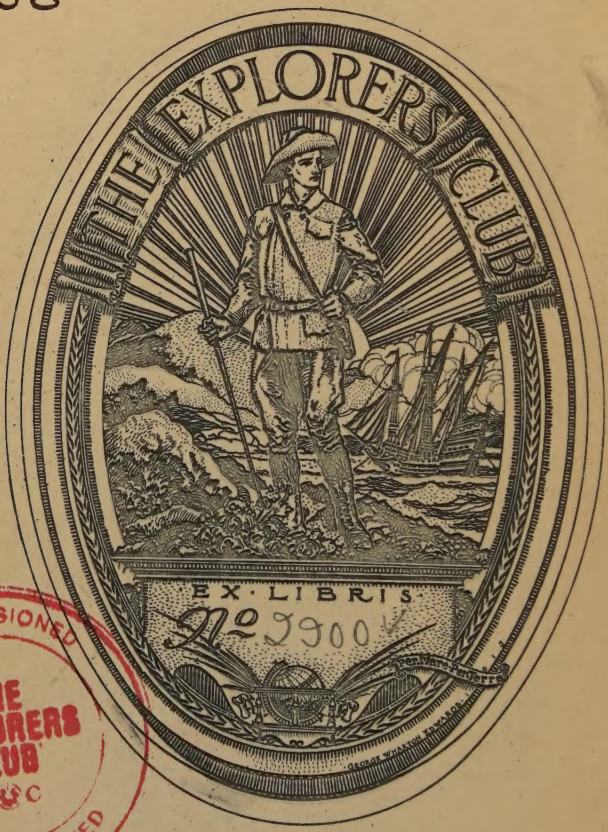

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PRESENTED BY
James B. Ford

ZENAS LEONARD'S NARRATIVE

Of this edition, five hundred and twenty copies have been printed

KEY TO MAP

A. Started from Independence in the spring of 1831. B. Made the fall hunt of 1831 and the spring hunt of 1832 about here. C. Was here at the rendezvous of 1832, in July, near which occurred the Battle of Pierre's Ho
D. Made the fall hunt of 1832 in this locality. E. Was at the mouth of the Stinking Water, where it empties into the Bighorn, January 1, 1833, among the Crows and here met Edward Rose. F. Was in this locality in the spr
of 1833, and it was here they had the trouble with the Aricaras. G. He was here at the summer rendezvous of 1833, and met Bonneville, where he became a member of the Walker expedition. H. Spent the winter of 1833-34
San Juan, near this point. I. Was at the Bear River rendezvous of 1834, again met Bonneville. J. Spent the fall, winter and spring of 1834-35 among the Crows in this neighborhood. K. Was at the rendezvous at Popo A
Creek in July, 1835; from this point he started for the frontier in company with Captain Bonneville. L. Arrived at Independence August 29, 1835.

EXPLORERS
JAMES B. FORD
CLUB

LEONARD'S NARRATIVE

Adventures of Zenas Leonard

Fur Trader and Trapper

1831-1836

Reprinted from the rare original of 1839

EDITED BY

W. F. WAGNER, M. D.

With maps and illustrations

CLEVELAND
THE BURROWS BROTHERS COMPANY
1904

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INTRODUCTION

THE evolution of the trapper may be traced far back to the old French régime when the *coureurs des bois*, rangers of the woods, or the peddlers of the wilderness, held sway; these were, however, more traders than trappers, and purchased the pelts from the Indians for trifles, and frequently accompanied them on their hunting excursions. They were as profligate as their successors, and their occupation passed away with the passing of the French control of Canada and with the establishment of the interior trading-posts by the merchants of Canada, who later formed companies and conducted the business in a more systematic manner. From these interior trading-posts traders and trappers were sent out to trade with the Indians and trap in their territory at the same time. The trading gradually fell into the hands of the trading-posts; the trapper meanwhile pursued his vocation, and it became his recognized and established business, and he remained an important factor in the fur-trade down to the time of its decline and ultimate death.

While Mr. Hunt was at Mackinaw engaging men for the Astoria venture, there arrived at this place some of these characters, and his description of them is so accurate that I take the liberty of giving it here:

A chance party of "Northwesters" appeared at Mackinaw from the rendezvous at Fort William. These held themselves up as the chivalry of the fur-trade. They were men of iron; proof against cold weather, hard fare, and perils of all kinds. Some would wear the Northwest button, and a formidable dirk, and assume something of a military air. They generally wore feathers in their hats, and affected the "brave." "Je suis un

homme du nord!" "I am a man of the north," — one of these swelling fellows would exclaim, sticking his arms akimbo and ruffling by the Southwesters, whom he regarded with great contempt, as men softened by mild climates and the luxurious fare of bread and bacon, and whom he stigmatized with the inglorious name of pork-eaters. The superiority assumed by these vainglorious swaggerers was, in general, tacitly admitted. Indeed, some of them had acquired great notoriety for deeds of hardihood and courage; for the fur-trade had its heroes, whose names resounded throughout the wilderness.

The influence and part played by the trapper and free trapper in the development of our great West, has had up to this time but little consideration from either the government or the people. We have given entirely too much credit to "pathfinders" whose paths were as well known to the above as is the city street to the pedestrian. It is true, however, they gave to the world a more complete description, and placed these secret ways of the mountains in a more correct geographical position, than the uneducated trapper was able to do.

There was not a stream or rivulet from the borders of Mexico to the frozen regions of the North, but what was as familiar to these mountain rangers and lonesome wanderers, as the most traveled highway in our rural districts. The incentive was neither geographical knowledge, nor the honor won by making new discoveries for the use and benefit of mankind in general, but a mercenary motive—the commercial value of the harmless and inoffensive little beaver. The trappers followed the course of the various streams looking for beaver signs, and had no interest whatever in any other particular. Every stream had a certain gold value if it contained this industrious little animal, and so they followed them from their source to their mouth with this one object in view. For their own comfort and convenience they observed

certain land-marks and the general topography of the country, in order that they might rove from one place to another with the least labor and inconvenience. In this manner they came to have a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the geography and topography of the great West, and were in truth the only pathfinders; but they have been robbed even of this honor to a great extent.

The life of the solitary trapper in the mountains seems unendurable to one who is fond of social intercourse or of seeing now and then one of his fellow-beings. This habit of seclusion seemed to grow on some of the men and they really loved the life on that account, with all its hardships, privations, and dangers. The free trappers formed the aristocratic class of the fur-trade, and were the most interesting people in the mountains. They were bound to no fur company, were free to go where and when they pleased. It was the height of the ordinary trapper's ambition to attain such a position. They were men of bold and adventurous spirit, for none other would have had the courage to follow so dangerous an occupation. They were liable to have too much of this spirit of bravado, and frequently did extremely foolhardy things, nor could their leaders always control them in these excesses. They were exceedingly vain of their personal appearance, and extravagantly fond of ornament for both themselves and their steeds, as well as their Indian wives. Indeed, they rivaled the proud Indian himself in the manner in which they bedecked themselves with these useless and cheap ornaments. They were utterly improvident, extremely fond of gambling and all games of chance, as well as all sorts of trials of skill, such as horsemanship and marksmanship; of course, the necessary wager to make it interesting was never wanting. As a general rule, the greater part of the proceeds of their labor was squandered at the

first rendezvous or trading-post which they reached, and it was of great importance to the trader to be the first to reach such a rendezvous, thus securing the greater part of this most profitable trade.

Very little is known of their lonely vigils and wanderings, with a companion or two, in the defiles of the mountains, and of the dangers and privations they have had to endure. How frequently their bones have been left to bleach on the arid plains, as the result of Indian hatred and hostility, without the rites of burial — their names, unhonored and unsung, will never be known. Certain tribes were the uncompromising enemies of the trappers, and when they had the misfortune to meet, they waged a relentless war, until one or the other party left the country or was exterminated. It is true, the returns were sometimes enormous, and had they exercised ordinary economy, even for one season, they could have retired from the dangers and privations of the mountains with a competence; but had they done so, it is altogether likely that they would sooner or later have again fallen victims to its allurements.

It is at the rendezvous and fort that the free trapper is seen in his true character. Here is usually spent the whole of his year's hard earnings in gambling, drinking, and finery. He wishes to establish the reputation of being a hale fellow, and he seldom fails so long as his money and credit last. Then he again returns to his lonely wanderings in the mountains, a sadder but not a wiser man, as the following year the same scene is enacted — provided he is so fortunate as to escape his treacherous enemies the Indians. The scenes presented at the mountain rendezvous in the early days must have been indeed wonderful, where hundreds of such characters were congregated; no pen however clever can do them full justice. The loss of life from other than natural causes from the years 1820 to 1840

cannot be estimated, and will never be fully known. At each rendezvous many former hale fellows were missing, never again to appear on this gay scene; their comrades recounted the manner of their death if known — their good traits were loyally lauded and their bad ones left untold — but the living did not take warning from these examples. Such was their life, hardships, dangers, and privations, also their pleasures — they lived only in the present, with little or no regard for the future. Irving gives the following extremely good description of them:

The influx of this wandering trade has had its effects on the habits of the mountain tribes. They have found the trapping of the beaver their most profitable species of hunting; and the traffic with the white man has opened to them sources of luxury of which they previously had no idea. The introduction of firearms has rendered them more successful hunters, but at the same time more formidable foes; some of them, incorrigibly savage and warlike in their nature, have found the expeditions of the fur traders grand objects of profitable adventure. To waylay and harass a band of trappers with their pack-horses when embarrassed in the rugged defiles of the mountains, has become as favorite an exploit with the Indians as the plunder of a caravan to the Arab of the desert. The Crows and Blackfeet, who were such terrors in the path of the early adventurers to Astoria, still continue their predatory habits, but seem to have brought them to greater system. They know the routes and resorts of the trappers; where to waylay them on their journeys; where to find them in the hunting seasons, and where to hover about them in winter-quarters. The life of a trapper, therefore, is a perpetual state militant, and he must sleep with his weapons in his hands.

A new order of trappers and traders, also, have grown out of this system of things. In the old times of the great North-west Company, when the trade in furs was pursued chiefly about the lakes and rivers, the expeditions were carried on in batteaux and canoes. The voyageurs or boatmen were the rank and file in the service of the trader, and even the hardy "men of the

north," those great rufflers and game birds, were fain to be paddled from point to point of their migrations.

A totally different class has now sprung up; — "the Mountaineers," the traders and trappers that scale the vast mountain chains, and pursue their hazardous vocations amidst their wild recesses. They move from place to place on horseback. The equestrian exercises, therefore, in which they are engaged, the nature of the countries they traverse, the vast plains and mountains, pure and exhilarating in atmospheric qualities, seem to make them physically and mentally a more lively and mercurial race than the fur traders and trappers of former days, the self-vaunting "men of the north." A man who bestrides a horse, must be essentially different from a man who cowers in a canoe. We find them, accordingly, hardy, lithe, vigorous, and active; extravagant in word, and thought, and deed; heedless of hardship; daring of danger; prodigal of the present, and thoughtless of the future.

A difference is to be perceived even between these mountain hunters and those of the lower regions along the waters of the Missouri. The latter, generally French creoles, live comfortably in cabins or log-huts, well sheltered from the inclemencies of the seasons. They are within the reach of frequent supplies from the settlements; their life is comparatively free from danger, and from most of the vicissitudes of the upper wilderness. The consequence is, that they are less hardy, self-dependent and game-spirited, than the mountaineer. If the latter by chance comes among them on his way to and from the settlements, he is like the game-cock among the common roosters of the poultry-yard. Accustomed to live in tents, or to bivouac in the open air, he despises the comforts and is impatient of the confinement of the log-house. If his meal is not ready in season, he takes his rifle, hies to the forest or prairie, shoots his own game, lights his fire, and cooks his repast. With his horse and his rifle, he is independent of the world, and spurns at all its restraints. The very superintendents at the lower posts will not put him to mess with the common men, the hirelings of the establishment, but treat him as something superior.

There is, perhaps, no class of men on the face of the earth, says Captain Bonneville, who lead a life of more continued

exertion, peril, and excitement, and who are more enamored of their occupations, than the free trappers of the West. No toil, no danger, no privation can turn the trapper from his pursuit. His passionate excitement at times resembles a mania. In vain may the most vigilant and cruel savages beset his path; in vain may rocks, and precipices, and wintry torrents oppose his progress; let but a single track of a beaver meet his eye, and he forgets all dangers and defies all difficulties. At times, he may be seen with his traps on his shoulder, buffeting his way across rapid streams, amidst floating blocks of ice; at other times, he is to be found with his traps swung on his back clambering the most rugged mountains, scaling or descending the most frightful precipices, searching, by routes inaccessible to the horse, and never before trodden by white man, for springs and lakes unknown to his comrades, and where he may meet with his favorite game. Such is the mountaineer, the hardy trapper of the West; and such, as we have slightly sketched it, is the wild, Robin Hood kind of life, with all its strange and motley populace, now existing in full vigor among the Rocky Mountains.

Many of these men were in the mountains because of the fascination of this mountain life, and were as lovally devoted to it as any individual is to his vocation. Many who were there, as well as many of the recruits, were men whose past would not bear too close inspection. They frequently went to the mountains to escape an outraged law, and remained not because of their love for the wilderness, but through fear that justice would be meted out to them should they return to the States. This was always a dangerous and undesirable element.

Another class of recruits, and by far the most numerous, was that represented by Leonard — being composed of young men or boys of an adventurous disposition. The alluring stories of the mountains and the great fortunes to be made in the trade, as illustrated by the very few on whom dame fortune had smiled, were the inducements held out to the inexperienced candidates for the mountains; the failures were, however, not mentioned and the trials, hard-

ships, dangers, and loss of life were scarcely taken into consideration. A great majority of these young men soon learned from that wonderful teacher — experience — that it was as difficult to accumulate fortunes in the mountains as elsewhere, and infinitely more dangerous. Such was the school of hardship and privation from which many good men graduated, and later became settlers and men of prominence in the rapidly developing great West.

Many of these men, particularly those in the employ of the British companies, and not only the trappers but the officers of the company as well, contracted marriages with Indian women and for this reason did not wish to return to civilization and their former homes. They therefore remained in the West and their families developed with the rapid growth of this new country, and in this manner some of the leading families have a trace of aboriginal blood in their veins, of which they are justly proud.

Such was the school which graduated the scout and guide of later days. It was they who conducted the scientific expeditions sent out by the government, the surveying as well as exploring parties; it was they who guided the first emigrants by the overland routes to Oregon and California; and they who ferreted out in their peregrinations in the mountains the passage-ways, for none of the above expeditions would have ventured into this *terra incognita* without one of these old trappers as guide. Even the army, while in pursuit of hostile Indians, had its corps of experienced scouts and guides, which was largely made up of these mountain-men. For this kind of service they were well fitted, as they were inured to hardships and dangers. The decline of the fur-trade practically left them stranded, and in looking about for employment they were glad to accept such positions; nevertheless, their services have never been properly appreciated.

The most renowned of all the fur companies was that known as the Hudson Bay Company, the real founder of which was a Frenchman by the name of Groseilliers. He established a post at the southern end of Hudson Bay, under English patronage, and his success here led to the organization of the company known as "The Governor and company of adventurers of England trading into Hudson Bay," but more commonly known as the Hudson Bay Company. Their charter is dated May 2, 1670. The privileges granted under this charter were the most comprehensive that could be imagined. They were the absolute proprietors of an immense area. They had supreme jurisdiction in both civil and military affairs. They had the power to make laws to govern the same, and to wage war against the natives if to their interest to do so. It was in fact a sovereignty in itself. They were not however without their troubles in these early days. The French claimed part of the territory covered by their charter, and the posts located therein became a prey to French expeditions, which in some instances became extremely rich prizes. The company never failed to look after their own interests when the treaties were being made after the various wars between England and France, until finally the French and Indian War terminated French dominion in Canada. This war was largely due to the English invading French territory, and mostly by this company in establishing trading-posts. Nothing of any moment appeared on their horizon to cause any disquietude until 1787, when the various companies in Canada and numerous Scotch merchants of Montreal — the latter being the ruling element — formed the Northwest Fur Company.

They immediately took the field in a most aggressive manner and in many instances invaded the charter rights of the older company. To this company as partner belonged

the celebrated Sir Alexander MacKenzie, who made extensive explorations in the Northwest, and was the first to cross the continent above the Spanish possessions, which he did in 1793, and shortly thereafter returned to England and wrote an account of the same, for which he received the honor of knighthood.

In the meantime the rivalry between these two companies went beyond all bounds. The old company, who had heretofore almost wholly depended on the Indian trade, was, in order to meet the competition of the new company, now compelled to send out trading and trapping parties, who frequently met those of the other, and fierce encounters took place. At this juncture in 1811, Lord Selkirk received a grant of land, on which to establish a colony, on the United States border near Lake Winnipeg in the Red River valley. This was done in order to injure the Northwest Company, at least they so construed it. The greatest sufferers were the poor colonists, whose desperate struggles are very ably written by an old Astorian fur-trader, Alexander Ross, who settled here with his family (his wife being an Indian) as did many others with the same domestic relations. This settlement became quite an asylum for returning traders with Indian families. This Northwest Fur Company is the company which succeeded Astor in his venture at the mouth of the Columbia.

The crisis was reached in their affairs about 1816, when the Northwest Company and the Hudson Bay Company in conjunction with the colonists, resorted to actual war, and many lives were lost on both sides. England could no longer ignore or evade the issue, the parties were brought into court and a long-drawn litigation ensued in which an immense amount of money was spent by both companies. It had the beneficial effect of bringing them to their senses; and, what had long been pointed out by far-sighted indi-

viduals as the best solution of the controversy — the amalgamation of the two companies — took place in 1821. The Northwest Company went out of existence and the Hudson Bay Company was the name adopted by the new organization which acquired all the rights and privileges of the older company, with some slight exceptions, its territory being thereby somewhat increased. The trials of the Red River settler were now at an end and this colony began to flourish, being well established and well governed. This merger, however, prevented the promotion and threw out of employment many of the old servants of both companies. Alexander Ross in particular describes how he was affected by it. The condition of the engagés was not much changed as they all found employment in the new company. Many of the clerks and minor officers were not given places, and those that were, had to be contented with positions much below those they formerly occupied. Many under these circumstances became dissatisfied, and sought occupation elsewhere; many found employment with the American companies, and became some of their best representatives. With the Hudson Bay Company, merit — and merit alone — was, and could be, the only road to advancement, this being one of the secrets of their success. No influence, however great, had any weight, if the applicant did not possess the necessary qualifications.

They discontinued the sale of alcoholic stimulants to the Indians, and only used it where competition compelled them to resort to this measure to hold their own with rival traders. We shall see how this operated against them when in contact with our American companies. It was undoubtedly the most perfectly organized monopoly then in existence, or which had ever existed. They also took measures to protect the fur-bearing animals, to prevent their becoming extinct. They were perfectly just in their

dealings with the Indians; each article had a certain fixed value, which the Indians soon came to recognize and respect, and as a result there was much less bickering than usually occurred with other companies. While they at times had trouble, it is true, with the natives, the latter knew that they would surely be called to account for their misdeeds, when justice would be meted out to them, however long it might take. They never ignored a transgression of their law, which the Indians soon came to respect and in this manner they were kept under almost complete control. We here see the hardy Scot at his best, as the bone and sinew of this powerful company was of that nationality. They, and not the English, carried it forward; invading new territories, and overcoming all obstacles, they brought all their native shrewdness into play to pacify the Indian and make him a source of revenue, whereby the coffers of the company were filled.

The name of Mackenzie or McKensie, is one of which the fur-trading annals of America may justly be proud. They were indeed wonderful men: Alexander, who was the first to cross the continent as already stated; and Donald, who became dissatisfied with the Northwest Company, and joined in the Astor venture on the Pacific. If we may believe Alexander Ross, the latter was the greatest of all the Northwest Company's traders. The amount of furs he collected seems almost beyond belief. After the downfall of the Astor enterprise, he became a partner in the Northwest Company, and was the means of establishing Fort Nez Percés, near the forks of the Columbia. His object was to be near the Snake River country, believing it one of the most prolific in furs on the continent, and if the above authority is to be relied upon, he certainly made good his belief. The amount of furs collected in this locality between 1814 and 1825 can scarcely be realized, and the

region covered will probably never be known. They trapped in the Snake River valley, and possibly the headwaters of the Missouri, as well as in Utah, Colorado, and Nevada. Ross describes it as the country beyond the Blue Mountains. He understood the Indian character thoroughly, and frequently avoided conflicts by using methods now in vogue by our politicians; if the men were surly, he would make friends with the women and children, and thus bring about a friendly feeling. He later became governor of the Red River settlement, and died and is buried in New York State.

Kenneth MacKenzie was scarcely less prominent than the above. He was one of the victims of the consolidation of 1821, after which he joined the Columbia and later Astor's American Fur Company, and was the first to establish himself permanently among the Blackfeet; he was in charge of the Upper Missouri, and was known as "King of the Upper Missouri Outfit." He was as prominent in the American Fur Company as the other two were in the British companies; but against the orders of the government, he started a distillery on the Upper Missouri, and in this manner his usefulness came to an end.

It is to be sincerely hoped that some day the seal of secrecy will be removed from the records of this monopoly — the Hudson Bay Company — that the world may learn more of the true history of the early fur-trading days.

The stirring times of the American Revolution in the east gave little opportunity to the people for commercial pursuits, and the fur-trade in particular. Soon after the close of this struggle John Jacob Astor appeared upon the scene, and before many years had elapsed, he was considered not only one of the leading merchants but fur-trader as well. The story of his career is very ably written by

many authorities; we shall have much to say of his connection with the Missouri River trade.

Captain Cook, after his famous voyage of 1776-80, during which he discovered the Sandwich Islands, visited the northwest coast of America. His report was so flattering as to the fur-trade, that many, particularly the merchants of Boston, at once made preparations to visit this coast. As a rule these ventures proved extremely profitable, and up to the time of the War of 1812 almost three times as many American vessels, or "Boston ships" as they were called, visited this coast as those of all other nations combined; many were English, and they were known to the natives as "King George ships." After a trading trip on this coast, when they had collected a cargo of furs, they would sail for China and exchange them for goods suitable for the American market, mostly nankeens. China was, and always has been, the best market for the finest furs.

Previous to the purchase of Louisiana, and while this country was under Spanish rule, numerous companies and individuals were engaged in the trade along the Missouri and its tributaries, although very few ventured to the Upper Missouri. The most prominent of these companies was Maxent, Laclede and Company, which after the death of Laclede was succeeded by others.

After the purchase of Louisiana, Lewis and Clark found, on their celebrated journey, the omnipresent Scot, the representative of the Northwest Fur Company, already on the Upper Missouri. In the report of this expedition particular stress was laid upon the fact that the country along their route was especially adapted to the establishment of a chain of trading-posts which could be extended to the Pacific. Astor at once saw the advantage of such an undertaking from a commercial standpoint, and it was from

this report of Lewis and Clark that he conceived the idea which he endeavored to carry out a few years later, by organizing the Pacific Fur Company, a complete history of which is to be found in Irving's *Astoria*.

About this period there was in St. Louis a trader who was second to none in the fur-trading annals of America, and, strange as it may appear, this gentleman was a Spaniard by birth, who for energy and enterprise was not surpassed by the hardy Scot of the north. This interesting individual was Manuel Lisa. He was upright, honest, a man of sterling worth, a competent judge of men and character, and undoubtedly the best equipped man in every way engaged in the trade on the Missouri at this time. He was a past-master in the thoroughness of his knowledge of Indian character, and fully acquainted with the Indian trade of the Missouri of that day. Irving, in his *Astoria*, does not give him this reputation, but Mr. Hunt, being also engaged in the trade, was inclined to interpret many of Lisa's acts as hostile to the Astor enterprise, in which he was greatly mistaken or misinformed — Lisa's reported hostilities were only conjectured, with no foundation whatever. For fully twenty years previous to this time, he had been engaged in the Indian trade on the Missouri, and saw as well as did Lewis and Clark, the proportions to which the fur-trade might be developed. He then formed a company in order to secure a share of this trade. In the spring of 1807, he took into his employ the celebrated John Colter, who had been with Lewis and Clark, and whose thrilling adventure with the Blackfeet is graphically related in Irving's *Astoria*. Lisa met this interesting character on the Missouri River on his return to St. Louis, and by liberal inducements prevailed upon him to turn back and guide him to the upper country. Colter was then for the third time returning from the

wilderness, and again turned his face toward the sources of the Missouri. He had not been in St. Louis for some years. Lisa returned the following year (probably August), having had many adventures, but evidently quite successful, and became the organizer and leading partner in the St. Louis Missouri Fur Company. With indomitable energy he continued his trading excursions up and down the Missouri, in season and out of season, never tiring or flagging, until the year 1820 when he died. His children by his regular marriage all died without issue, but he left some progeny by an Indian wife of the Omaha tribe. His estate was much involved at the time of his death. He is buried in St. Louis.

When Lewis and Clark reached the Mandan villages, on their return from the Pacific in 1806, they persuaded one of the leading Mandan chiefs — named Shahaka, or Gros Blanc, Big White — to accompany them to St. Louis and Washington with a view of making a visit to President Jefferson, one of the express stipulations being that he should be safely escorted back to his nation. Accordingly, the following summer an expedition was organized for this purpose. The chief's prty consisted of himself and an interpreter, René Jesseaume — each with his wife and child. Their escort consisted of two non-commissioned officers and eleven privates under the command of Ensign Nathaniel Pryor, who had been a member of the Lewis and Clark expedition. They started on their way back from St. Louis in May, 1807, and with them a number of other parties set out for the upper country. All went well until they reached the rascally Aricaras, where, it is said, Lisa, who preceded the parties (Pryor's and Pierre Chouteau's parties having traveled together), gained passage through their territory by some underhand method, which charge is not well sustained. The latter had an extremely

fierce battle with these Indians, and as a result when practically at the chief's door-step, only three days' march after their tedious journey, Ensign Pryor was compelled to retreat with his charge the entire distance to St. Louis. Thus ended the first attempt to return Big White.

The following year Governor Lewis on the part of the government made a contract with the members of the Missouri Fur Company for the return of the Mandan. The company agreed to engage one hundred and twenty-five men, of whom forty should be "Americans and expert riflemen," under the command of Pierre Chouteau. The compensation for this service was to be seven thousand dollars, one-half to be paid on starting. In this manner it was that Big White was returned to his home, and not as stated in Coyner's *Lost Trappers*. It is altogether likely that Edward Rose was one of this party of expert riflemen. About this time occurred a decline in the value of furs, although expeditions left St. Louis regularly for purposes of trade on the Missouri. It was also about this time (1810) that Mr. Hunt made his appearance in St. Louis with his company, on his way to Astoria.

The Missouri River trade for the next ten years, owing largely to the decline in furs and the war with England, did not attain the magnitude which might have been expected from the earlier bright prospects. It must be remembered that this was long before the days of steamboats on the Missouri and the only means of transportation was by keelboats. A rope was attached and the boat pulled by fifteen or twenty men, and where this was not feasible poles were used. At this work the Canadian voyageurs were extremely valuable.

In the year 1822, Jones and Immel sent a fine cargo of furs down to St. Louis from the upper river, but in the following year met with a disaster at the hands of the

Blackfeet in which both the leaders and five men were killed, and by which they lost about fifteen thousand dollars' worth of property.

We now come to consider the Rocky Mountain Fur Company and the American Fur Company, Western department—the former very important in the Rocky Mountain trade, the latter in that of the Missouri River.

The American Fur Company had, previous to this time (1822), been doing business on the borders of the Great Lakes, on the American side, having succeeded in having certain laws enacted whereby English companies were not allowed to trade in American territory. This part of their territory became known as the Northern department, and the Missouri River trade became known as the Western department. Thus after the lapse of nearly ten years since the failure of the Pacific Fur Company, Astor was again established in this fur-trading center of the West. The new department was supplied with men, many of whom had been with Astor in the unprofitable venture on the Pacific. Ramsey Crooks and Russell Farnham were two leaders. About 1827 they absorbed the Columbia Fur Company and from this company secured some of their leading men — the most prominent one being Kenneth MacKenzie. The posts and territory secured from this company were on the Upper Missouri, and the name "Upper Missouri Outfit" ("U. M. O.") was given to it, and the employees of the old company were mostly retained. In this manner the American Fur Company became established on the Upper Missouri, with Kenneth MacKenzie as director. He became known as the "King of the Upper Missouri Outfit." This is the MacKenzie referred to by Leonard. The first permanent post established by them was Fort Union about two hundred miles above the mouth of the Yellowstone, in the year 1829, and later others were

established. In the year 1831, MacKenzie concluded a treaty of peace with the Blackfeet, the greatest enemies to the whites on the Missouri, and thus became firmly established in their country. Following is a copy of the treaty:

On the vigil of St. Andrew in the year 1831, the powerful and distinguished nation of the Blackfeet, Piegan, and Blood Indians by their ambassadors appeared at Fort Union near the spot where the Yellowstone River unites its current with the Missouri, and in the council chamber of the Governor, Kenneth McKensie, and the principal chief of the Assiniboine nation, the Man-that-Holds-the-Knife, attended by his chiefs of council, le Bechu, le Borgne, the Sparrow, the Bear's Arm, La Terre qui Tremble, and l'Enfant de Medecin, when, conforming to all ancient customs and ceremonies, and observing the due mystical signs enjoined by the great medicine lodges, a treaty of peace and friendship was entered into by the said high contracting parties, and is testified by their hands and seals hereunto annexed, hereafter and forever to live as brethren of one large, united, and happy family; and may the great spirit who watcheth over us all approve our conduct and teach us to love one another.

Done, executed, ratified, and confirmed at Fort Union on the day and year, first herein written, in the presence of Jas. Archdale Hamilton.

Let us go back to the time when MacKenzie was a member of the Columbia Fur Company. At this time, as we shall see when we take up the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, General Ashley had returned from the third of his remarkably successful expeditions from beyond the Rocky Mountains. He caused much speculation in the fur-mart of St. Louis. MacKenzie looked with jealous eye on this prolific fur-bearing territory, being anxious to enter it and share its immense profits — which he eventually did, but realized very little.

An epoch in the Missouri River trade was the advent of the steamboat, replacing the faithful old keelboats, which were relegated to oblivion very much in the same manner

as is the canal-boat at the present time. The first boat was built in Louisville and was named the "Yellowstone." Guided by Captain B. Young, she left St. Louis, April 16, 1831, on her maiden trip, which she made with but little difficulty. She supplied the Upper Missouri posts. In this manner the American Fur Company, a thoroughly organized company with unlimited capital, continued trading on the Missouri for many years, with no competition to cause them any alarm.

The only real rival of this company was the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, whose organization was imperfect and capital very limited, although their men, who were masters at the business, conducted affairs in the mountains with much energy. They were pushed to the wall, as we shall see, largely through the efforts of the American Fur Company, although the latter lost a great deal of money in accomplishing it. The American Fur Company carried on trade largely along the Missouri River and its tributaries. This territory the Rocky Mountain Fur Company recognized as theirs, and seldom invaded it, probably for the very good reason that its financial resources did not warrant it. The former company was not slow in invading the rich and sacred precincts of the Rocky Mountain Company, and by dogging its footsteps and hindering its trapping and trading, eventually brought about its downfall. They, however, suffered much before it was accomplished, in which one can almost see the master-hand of an Astor.

The origin of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company dates from an advertisement in the *Missouri Republican* of March 20, 1822, in which Major Andrew Henry — an old hand at the business, who had been on the Upper Missouri at the time Mr. Hunt and party crossed to the Pacific in

1811 — and William H. Ashley advertised for one hundred young men to trap and trade on the Upper Missouri. The first license to trade was granted to Ashley April 11, 1822. The desired number of young men was easily obtained. They were to be absent about three years, under the command of the veteran Andrew Henry. After much loss of property and other misfortunes they finally established a post at the mouth of the Yellowstone. He had trouble with the Blackfeet and lost a number of men. In the meantime Ashley had advertised for another hundred men, and started out on his disastrous expedition of 1823. Jedediah S. Smith was a member of this party — in fact Smith, Sublette, and Jackson were all with Ashley at this time and later succeeded him in the business. Of all the expeditions up the Missouri previous to this time, Mr. Hunt and his party were about the only ones to escape the fickle and treacherous Aricaras.

The following year, they made quite a successful hunt in the Green River valley, and a party under Etienne Prevost very probably crossed the mountains by the South Pass. No doubt, they were the first whites to pass through this defile, which, later, was largely used by emigrants on their western journeys to Oregon and California. The Oregon trail passed through it. Being well adapted to the use of wagons, it is one of the easiest passages through the Rocky Mountains within the confines of the United States.

At this period, Andrew Henry drops from the annals of the fur-trade, 1824-25, and we hear nothing more of him in this connection.

General Ashley decided to abandon the Missouri River trade; the discoveries of Henry, Smith, and Prevost convinced him of the fact that beaver were far more plentiful beyond the mountains in the neighborhood of the Great

Salt Lake. Another weighty reason for this change was that at this time the Missouri Fur Company was extremely active in the trade of the Upper Missouri, and that many others were engaged in it, while the strong American Fur Company was preparing to enter it also — probably Ashley thought this amount of competition might prove ruinous to his limited means.

At this point we must give Ashley credit for a departure from the old and time-honored methods then in vogue with the older companies; instead of forts he established the rendezvous, which was a meeting-place at some suitable point in the mountains where the trappers and friendly Indians would congregate, usually about July, as at this time furs were not taken. Here they exchanged their furs for needed supplies for the coming year, after which they returned to their lonely haunts and continued trapping until another year rolled by. Then they again made their appearance and usually squandered the greater part of their year's earnings, only to return again to the wilderness. Thus an entirely new order of things was established, and the rendezvous became an extremely unique and important feature of the mountain trade. Ashley also abandoned that great highway of the fur-trade, the Missouri River, and continued overland along the river Platte to the mountains, in the summer of 1824, and probably spent the following winter in the Green River valley. Here he met with some adventures in endeavoring to navigate the Green River the following spring. Shortly after these events, he met Prevost and his party, and continued westward to the Salt Lake valley. Prevost while traversing this territory had an encounter with the Snake Indians (a very unusual occurrence, as they were and always had been very friendly —this is probably the only instance of hostility on their part) in which he lost many men.

Ashley explored the country south of Salt Lake as far as Sevier Lake, which he named after himself. They then turned north to reach the annual rendezvous in the Upper Green River valley, and it was probably at Cache valley that he met the Hudson Bay trader, Peter Skene Ogden, with a large party, and furs estimated at from $70,000 to $200,000. Ashley came into possession of these furs, for practically nothing — some say that he found them in cache and robbed it, others say that he bought them to relieve Ogden's necessities. There seems to be a cloud over the whole transaction, and no one has ever been able to get at the facts in the affair. As a result it has caused much speculation, and as the Hudson Bay Company has never given any explanation, we are left entirely in the dark.

It was, however, the turning-point in Ashley's financial career. He had up to this time been deeply involved in debt and in this manner was enabled to pay off his indebtedness and lay the foundation for a substantial fortune. From the Green River rendezvous he returned to St. Louis with the furs, through the South Pass by way of the Bighorn to the Yellowstone, thence to and down the Missouri River. The old fort which they had established some two years previous they found in ruins. Fortune still smiled upon Ashley. Arriving at the Missouri, he had the good fortune to fall in with General Atkinson, who offered him and his outfit a safe convoy to Council Bluffs, thus making the journey to St.Louis of little danger or risk.

The rendezvous of 1826 was to be at Cache valley, where no doubt Ashley hoped to meet another Ogden. He set out for this point in March, 1826, having been married since his return. This journey was up the North Platte and Sweetwater and through the South Pass. It was on this journey that he took with him his celebrated wheeled cannon — a six-pounder — to Utah Lake, where

he installed it at his trading-post. In July of this year, while at the rendezvous, he sold out his interest in the mountain trade to Jedediah S. Smith, David E. Jackson, and William L. Sublette — a worthy trio indeed, the leaders and best men under Ashley. From this time forward, they traded under the name of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. They had an agreement with General Ashley whereby he was to supply them with goods. From the rendezvous he at once returned to St. Louis, taking with him the result of the year's hunt — one hundred and twenty-three packs of beaver-skins. General Ashley never again returned to the mountains, but, having political ambition, was later elected to congress.

The following year Smith, Sublette, and Jackson sent down one hundred and thirty packs of beaver and were able to liquidate all their indebtedness to General Ashley. The phenomenal success of Ashley set the whole fur-trade in a flurry, and the great American Fur Company began to reach out as we have indicated. Up to this time Ashley had carried from the mountains in three or four years $250,000 worth of furs — a fabulous amount for those days. Many adventurers went to the mountains to seek a fortune, and it was probably some of these stories that influenced Leonard to engage in the trade. We elsewhere give the adventures of Jedediah S. Smith while he was a member of this company. The other two partners carried on a very successful trade in the mountains.

In the spring of 1830, the company made a departure from the old custom of using pack animals, by conveying their supplies to the mountains in wagons. This is the first instance of the use of wagons in this connection although they had long been in use on the Santa Fé trail. They followed what was later known as the Oregon trail to the rendezvous on Wind River.

At the rendezvous of this year, another change took place. The partners, following the example of Ashley, sold out their interest to their leading men — Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton G. Sublette (brother of William), Henry Fraeb, J. B. Gervais, and James Bridger, the celebrated guide of later years. This transfer occurred August 4, 1830, and the firm continued the use of the name Rocky Mountain Fur Company. The three partners returned to St. Louis at once with an extremely valuable cargo of furs — one hundred and ninety packs of beaver.

After the breaking up of the Wind River rendezvous, in August, 1830, Fitzpatrick, Sublette, and Bridger with two hundred men moved north along the Bighorn, crossed the Yellowstone, to the neighborhood of the Great Falls of the Missouri, then to the three forks, and up the Jefferson branch to the divide. They were extremely successful and a large amount of furs was taken, the party being too strong for the treacherous Blackfeet to attack. Having crossed the divide and reached Ogden's Hole, they fell in with the Hudson Bay Company trader of that name, and Fitzpatrick, following the example of Ashley, proceeded at once to relieve him of his furs. The Hudson Bay people allowed no liquor to be used in their trade — very much to their credit — but the throats of their trappers were dry — enough at any rate to overcome their scruples. The Rocky Mountain Fur Company was fortunately well supplied with this article, and Ogden, the Hudson Bay trader, was perfectly helpless, placed as he was in the hands of the unscrupulous Fitzpatrick. The result was that the latter secured the furs of all the Hudson Bay Company trappers, the product of one whole year's hard labor, at a very small cost to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. A great deal of mystery surrounds Ashley's transaction, and we are therefore unable to say which of the

two made the better bargain, he or his unscrupulous successor. It is, however, nothing to the credit of either, and is in striking contrast to the treatment accorded Jedediah S. Smith of the same company some few years previous by the Hudson Bay Company.

After this discreditable transaction at Ogden's Hole, Fitzpatrick and his party returned eastward to Powder River valley, where they arrived before the cold weather set in. In the spring of 1831, they set out for the Blackfoot country, but had not proceeded far before their horses were stolen by the Crows. After some effort they recaptured their own and at the same time secured many of the horses belonging to these Indians. Shortly after this affair, Fitzpatrick with only one companion started for St. Louis, reaching Council Bluffs April 19. It must be remembered that it was just about this time that Leonard departed from St. Louis for the mountains. When the former reached St. Louis he was prevailed upon to accompany Smith, Sublette, and Jackson to Santa Fé, they having entered the Santa Fé trade, and thence to return with the outfit to the rendezvous. It was on this expedition that Jedediah S. Smith was killed on the Cimarron desert by the Comanches. Fitzpatrick, on arriving at Santa Fé, continued north along the eastern base of the mountains, and reached the North Platte near the mouth of the Laramie, late in the year. Leonard, however, says that "Fitzpatrick arrived at the mouth of the Laramie about September 1 on his way to St. Louis." Fitzpatrick was met near the Platte by Fraeb and conducted to the Powder River valley, where the five partners were gathered together to spend the winter. This is not in accord with Leonard's statement. They expected to spend a quiet winter, in which they were disappointed, as here appeared for the first time the representatives of the American Fur

Company, from the Upper Missouri, presumably under orders from Kenneth MacKenzie. They now for the first time began to feel the pressure of this powerful rival, of thorough organization and unlimited means, which eventually drove them from the mountains and out of business. They at this time wished to share in the profits of the mountain trade. The men in charge of the party who were thus invading the territory of the Rocky Mountain Company were Vanderburgh, Drips, and Fontenelle, whose policy it was to follow the trappers of the above company and learn the best trapping-grounds. It was not a very honorable procedure to say the least, but such were the methods of the mountains and these companies. The Rocky Mountain Company, as we have seen, did not draw the lines very closely in this respect themselves. The object of the American Fur Company now became apparent when the two rival companies were camped side by side. Fitzpatrick and his associates quietly stole out of the country and traveled very rapidly for about four hundred miles west to the forks of the Snake River, having previously fixed the next rendezvous at Pierre's Hole, while they spent the winter with the Nez Percés and Flatheads. However, the peace, serenity, and prosperity of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company were forever at an end. During all this while, according to Leonard, Fitzpatrick was in St. Louis.

Fitzpatrick and party made their spring hunt along the course of the Snake, Salt, and John Day rivers, and then into Bear River valley, where, much to their disgust, they again met Vanderburgh and Drips, who were evidently trying to find them. They resolved to seek other trapping-grounds at once, which they did, and returned to the assemblage of trappers and Indians, at the summer rendezvous of 1832, at Pierre's Hole. It must be remem-

bered that during this period Leonard was in the mountains about the Laramie River.

Here again the representatives of the American Fur Company made their appearance, to the infinite vexation of the Rocky Mountain Company, but their presence at this time was a far more serious matter. The time had about arrived for the trappers and Indians to assemble, and should the American Fur Company be the first to receive their supplies, they would reap the harvest that had heretofore fallen to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. This was a serious consideration and it was of the utmost importance that their convoy of merchandise should arrive first. William L. Sublette had the contract to bring out this year's supplies. In this dilemma it was decided that Fitzpatrick should go to meet him and hurry him forward with the goods. Fitzpatrick set out with his usual promptness, and made remarkable time; he was an extremely active man, and fortunately met Sublette with the supplies on the Platte below the mouth of the Laramie River, about four hundred miles from the rendezvous. On their way back, June 13, Fitzpatrick hired a party of men at the Laramie River belonging to the firm of Gant and Blackwell, who had experienced a most unsuccessful campaign at trapping during the previous winter. This was the party to which Leonard belonged, although the time does not quite agree with that of Leonard. We find in this statement that Fitzpatrick was at the mouth of the Laramie River previous to January 1, 1832, and again on June 13 of this year; the question arises, did Leonard see him both times?

When the party arrived at the Sweetwater, Fitzpatrick went on ahead to carry the news of Sublette's approach, and met with the adventure as related by Leonard. William L. Sublette with the supplies reached the rendezvous at

Pierre's Hole July 8. Further on we shall relate the incidents which occurred at this the most celebrated rendezvous of the mountains.

From the rendezvous at Pierre's Hole Leonard went with a number of others to trap on the Humboldt or Mary's River. The rendezvous having broken up July 17, we will again follow the Rocky Mountain Company, simply to show what rivalry and intense feeling of hatred existed against the American Fur Company and its methods.

Fitzpatrick and Bridger went to the trapping-ground on the Jefferson fork of the Missouri, and here they had the mortification of learning that Vanderburgh and Drips were again on their trail. They now offered to compromise by dividing the territory, but the offer was declined. The tactics of the American Fur Company were beginning to show results, and Fitzpatrick and Bridger with all their knowledge and shrewdness could not shake them off, and the trapping season was thus slipping away. Becoming thoroughly exasperated and out of patience, they resolved to lure their opponents to follow in order to teach them a lesson. They now plunged into the forbidden land of the Blackfeet, and lured and encouraged their rivals from point to point, until they were attacked by these Indians and Vanderburgh, one of the leaders, was killed. This was the object which Fitzpatrick and Bridger had in view when they went to this neighborhood, knowing that the others would not be as well prepared and on their guard as they, and probably only regretted that the destruction was not more complete. The party of Fitzpatrick and Bridger barely escaped, and Bridger was severely wounded in the shoulder — an arrow-head remaining in his body for nearly two years, when it was removed by the celebrated missionary physician Doctor Whitman, in the mountains, while on

his way to Oregon. After this affair, which shows the intense feeling that existed and the extremes to which both parties would go in matters of trade, the Rocky Mountain Fur Company wintered in the valley of the Snake River, and in the following spring made their usual hunt, and all were gathered together again at the head of Green River, which was the rendezvous for the year 1833.

We here find again side by side the two rival companies, also Captain Bonneville and his company, the energetic Yankee — Nathaniel J. Wyeth — an officer of the English army, Captain Stuart, Robert Campbell, with party and outfit fresh from St. Louis, besides a large number of Indians of various tribes, who visited the rendezvous.

The trade had by this time fallen off very much and the Rocky Mountain Fur Company sent from this rendezvous to St. Louis but fifty-five packs of beaver.

The numerous bands of trappers now departed for their fall hunt. Fitzpatrick accompanied the various parties who were returning to St. Louis by way of the Missouri, as far as the Bighorn, where they parted. He was now in the Crow land where he went to seek permission to trap the coming season, but before he could make his request known, they had robbed him of everything he possessed. Fitzpatrick charged the American Fur Company with being the instigators of this affair, but he was simply being repaid at his own game, and was in no wise to be pitied. It was during this period that Leonard was absent from the mountains with Walker on his California expedition.

The trade was now becoming completely demoralized, and the Rocky Mountain Company was in very much the same condition when they met in Green River valley in 1834. Here a dissolution of the company was agreed upon

— Henry Fraeb selling out his interest for forty head of horses, forty beaver traps, eight guns, and $1,000 in merchandise; Gervais doing the same for twenty horses, thirty traps, and $500 in merchandise. This low price of the shares of the company shows that they were not considered of much value. Fitzpatrick, Sublette, and Bridger, who remained, formed a new company trading in their individual names, and assumed the obligations of the old company. Thus, with the summer rendezvous of 1834, at Green River, we have to record the death of the once mighty Rocky Mountain Fur Company.

Fitzpatrick, Sublette, and Bridger bought the post built by William L. Sublette and Robert Campbell in 1834 on the Laramie, the following year, and entered the service of the company which had caused their downfall — the American Fur Company. From this time forward this powerful organization had a monopoly of the trade, and the history of the trade is simply a history of this company. The romance, however, connected with the fur-trade had departed. Besides the leading companies mentioned, there were quite a number of individual traders in the mountains previous to 1835, namely, William L. Sublette, Robert Campbell, J. O. Pattie, Mr. Pilcher, Charles and William Bent, Ceran St. Vrain, and Mr. Gant and Mr. Blackwell.

The introduction by the whites of vices and diseases among the Indians and particularly the latter, undermined and sapped the vitality of the natives, making them today a mere shadow of their former selves, and a hopelessly degenerate race. No estimate can be made of the destructiveness of these agencies, no reliable statistics being available, but that they were exceedingly great, there can be no question. We have alluded to the destructiveness of the wars among the various Indian tribes and between the tribes and the whites — in many instances the

loss of life was fearful. With them war meant death — no mercy was asked or given — prisoners, with few exceptions, were taken only with a view to torture. Yet these wars were a mere bagatelle when compared with the loss of life as a result of the vices and diseases introduced by the white people.

The use of alcoholic stimulants to which the Indians soon became slaves, as well as venereal diseases which became universal, undermined the naturally strong constitutions of the natives and tainted and weakened the constitutions of their offspring as well. The far-reaching, deteriorating influence of these conditions can only be imagined. As will be seen by studying the early history and the fur-trading and trapping era of the great West, the trappers and traders — many of them men of low moral standard — were largely responsible for this condition of affairs.

The one disease which, more than any other, is responsible for the depopulation of the Indians, is the smallpox. Whether this disease was prevalent among the Indians previous to the coming of the whites is a question that has not been definitely settled. The destructiveness of this disease among the natives is almost beyond conception — it was fatal beyond anything known to the whites, and the Indians dreaded it as they did no other enemy.

Even among the whites the epidemics of a century or two ago were more dreaded by them than almost any other disease, and in the early colonial days of this country some of the epidemics were frightful. Either the contagion or the epidemics are growing less severe, or the disease is being modified by passing through generation after generation; or vaccination may be modifying the course of the disease; at any rate, epidemics are less frequent and less severe, and the death-rate is far below what it formerly

was. At the present time we know more about, and can better manage, this dreadful scourge of former years.

The Indians were absolutely ignorant of the nature of the disease, as much as a child, and their mode of living, particularly in the winter season, had a tendency to produce fatal results; it is rather remarkable that any of them recovered during ordinary epidemics, under the treatment they received.

The armamentarium of the Indian for the treatment of all diseases and ailments is the sweat-house in one form or another, and this is usually followed by a cold plunge even in the northern latitudes, in winter, and particularly along the Missouri, where some of the most dreadful epidemics raged. This is their infallible and universal remedy. If we, who know something of the nature of this disease should take a patient and place him in a sweat-house until he is in a dripping perspiration, then subject him to a cold plunge, and place him in a tepee where the temperature cannot be regulated — how many of our smallpox patients would recover, and what would be the mortality? If any should escape, they would be extremely fortunate, and the mortality would no doubt be almost as high as among the Indians.

These conditions contributed to a great extent to the high death-rate among the natives, whose constitutions were in many instances also being undermined by vices and constitutional diseases of another character. Many of the fur companies resorted to vaccination of the Indians.

Previous to 1800 there had been epidemics of the disease along the Missouri and elsewhere but not of sufficient severity to be particularly noted in the meager records of that time. The first alarming and fatal epidemic of which we have a more complete account, which made great inroads into some of the tribes, extending as far

west as the Pacific, was that in the year 1800, and subsequently minor ones from time to time, until the dreadful scourge and epidemic of 1837, which surpassed anything ever known or heard of in the annals of the Missouri. This terrible pestilence was confined mostly to the Indians of the Upper Missouri, but spread from tribe to tribe, carrying death, destruction, and terror in its path; fire and the sword had no terrors as compared to it; it seemed to outdo itself, and to mock and glory in its very destructiveness. The poor Indian was struck with terror, and implored, begged, and entreated his deity and the whites, that the scourge might cease — so deadly was it that many thought it something else than the smallpox — a punishment brought on by the displeasure of the Great Spirit. The suffering, terror, and helplessness of the Indian seemed to dull his intellect and he was as one dumb, facing the fell monster without courage to resist. We have graphic accounts of it written by eye-witnesses. According to Larpenteur this scourge was introduced by the whites, having been brought in by the steamboat "St. Peters," of the American Fur Company, which arrived at Fort Union on the 24th of June, 1837. Some writers say there was but one case on board, but it is quite certain there were more. The American Fur Company was criminally negligent in this affair, for, knowing the contagious nature of this disease, it should not under any circumstances have allowed the boat to ascend the river and come in contact with the Indians. The situation was, however, a rather difficult one to deal with. The Indians expected the boat, knowing that it contained goods for their benefit, and had it failed to arrive it would have been difficult to explain, and would have been interpreted as an attempt to rob them. On the other hand it was impossible for the boat to return and another to come up, for by this time the river would have

fallen and been too low for steamboat navigation; and, again, it can hardly be attributed to selfish motives, for the company would no doubt have been the heaviest loser by the introduction of such a disease. The vessel should have stopped and been unloaded, thoroughly fumigated and cleansed, also the cargo, and those suffering from the disease cared for on shore; then only should it have proceeded or the goods been shipped in some other manner. The officers of the boat, it is certain, never realized the gravity of the situation until it was too late — not thinking for an instant that they were carrying one of the most dreadful scourges that ever befell the Indians or any people. The company's officers tried to avert the danger of infection by endeavoring to keep the Indians away from the boat; the latter, thinking this was merely a ruse to cheat them, could not be restrained, knowing that the boat contained goods for them. It was in vain to expostulate, implore, and explain; they were deaf to all entreaty. When the boat arrived at Fort Clark a Mandan chief stole a blanket from a man upon the boat who was suffering from the disease. Mr. Chardon, then in charge of the fort, made every effort to at once gain possession of this blanket, promising pardon for the theft, and new blankets in place of the infected one, all, however, to no purpose. He endeavored to keep the Indians away by sending them warning, using every inducement and argument in his power — explaining, entreating, and warning — but in vain; for in a short while the whole village was seen coming down the river, and pitched their tents near the fort.

In reading the early history of these fur-trading days, we have frequently had reason to admire the Mandans who were uniformly friendly to the whites, and in fact they were rather the favorites with the early traders; there is not

so far as we know an unfriendly act towards the whites recorded against them; they, however, suddenly drop from the face of the earth, and out of sight and existence, from among the Missouri River tribes, but we have here the explanation.

Smallpox appeared among them about June 15, 1837, and continued apparently until it had found a victim in the very last one of them. It raged with a fatality and virulence never before known. Death was almost instantaneous. The victim was seized with an excruciating pain in the back and head, frequently with a chill, and in a few hours was dead. The body immediately turned black and swelled to thrice its natural size. Such was the fatality of the epidemic, that nearly every one who was attacked by it died.

The Indians soon found that the warnings of the whites were true, and realized the character of the calamity that was upon them. It produced a most profound effect upon their feelings. Some were for taking summary vengeance upon the whites, but before they could carry out their purpose the scourge and the hand of death were upon them. Some who saw it felt that the Great Spirit had stricken them for attempting to injure their friends, the whites. They would then supplicate the latter to defend them, imploring their forgiveness for not having listened to them in the first instance; but the whites were now quite as powerless as they to stay the hand of death. The disease spread with frightful rapidity, and found victims daily by the hundreds; it became impossible to bury them, none had the inclination or the courage, they were thrown in piles over a cliff, and as a result, in addition to all the above horrors, a sickening stench pervaded the atmosphere for miles around. In the presence of this disaster, without the power to stay or avert it, the Indians became desperate.

Many resorted to self-destruction, by shooting, stabbing, or drowning. One chief, before he was stricken, but feeling that he would shortly become a victim, commanded his wife to dig his grave. Sorrowfully she performed the duty, and when the work was done, the warrior threw himself into it and at the same time stabbed himself to death. The tragedy was however not over — the broken-hearted squaw went back to her lodge and child, where, before another sun had passed, a more terrible fate overtook them in the dread disease. Two young men just stricken with the disease conferred with each other as to the best way to end their existence, and having agreed as to details, fearlessly carried it into execution. Every day was crowded with the most pathetic, sorrowful, and soul-stirring incidents to these most unfortunate of God's mortals, as the dread pestilence daily carried off victim after victim. Tenderness and passion, love and hatred, were at last blunted and blurred in the presence of this awful calamity. At last the Indians sought, by wandering singly and alone in the prairie and avoiding each other, to overcome the disease.

In this manner the great and powerful tribe of the Mandans was literally sacrificed by the almost criminal carelessness of the American Fur Company. The Mandans at the time of the visit of Lewis and Clark numbered about 1,500 or 2,000 souls, though probably somewhat less at this time; after the ravages of this disease, only about thirty persons — mostly old men and boys — were left of this once powerful tribe. "No language can picture," says one writer, "the scene of desolation which the country presents. In whatever direction we go we see nothing but melancholy wrecks of human life. The tents are still standing on every hill, but no rising smoke announces the presence of human beings, and no sounds, but the croaking

of the raven and the howling of the wolf, interrupt the fearful silence."

Of all the tribes the Mandans suffered the most, and as we have seen came near actual extermination. A band of Aricaras were encamped near the afflicted Mandans and for some unknown reason escaped the disease until after it had wrought such fearful havoc with the latter. This fact made the Mandans suspicious, who at once thought the whites and Aricaras were in league to cause their destruction. The disease, however, soon broke out among the latter and very nearly exterminated them as well. It also made great inroads into the Minnetarees.

The introduction of smallpox at Fort Union would seem to have been as certain as any sequence of cause and effect, but no adequate measures were taken to prevent it. Besides the infected cargo which had to be unloaded, one of the passengers, Jacob Halsey, well known on the river as clerk and partner of the Upper Missouri Outfit, was already sick when he arrived, but nevertheless took up his residence at the fort. Halsey had been vaccinated and the disease was not malignant in his case, although it was a severe shock to a constitution naturally not strong, and further weakened by habitual dissipation. As Halsey's was the only case, it was thought that the spread of the disease could be circumvented. But Mr. E. T. Denig, another well-known clerk of the company, had it, though not fatally, and then a squaw was carried off with it. The only Indians at the post at the time were some thirty squaws, and now as the spread of the infection was hopelessly certain, "prompt measures were adopted," in the language of Larpenteur, "to prevent an epidemic." These measures were none other than the vaccination of all the squaws with the smallpox virus itself, there being no regular vaccine matter at the fort. The poor squaws knew

no better and meekly submitted to the operation. "Their systems" were "prepared according to Dr. Thomas' Medical Book" and they were vaccinated from Halsey himself. This course was adopted, Larpenteur assures us, with cynical coolness, "with a view to have it all over and everything all cleaned up before any Indians should come in, on their fall trade, which commenced early in September." Such is the astonishing confession of one of the American Fur Company's servants, and such was the desperate length to which the traders would go when the interests of their business could be promoted. Thirty squaws, imprisoned within the palisades, were deliberately sacrificed to one of the most loathsome pests in nature, in order "to have it all over and everything cleaned up" before the company's trade should be injured.

But this heroic purpose utterly miscarried. Larpenteur says that the mistake made was in not vaccinating from a person of sound physical constitution, which Halsey did not have, as if a disease which was at that moment raging further down the river with unprecedented power could be much intensified by being communicated from an unsound constitution! The result of this culpable oversight was, in the terse and unsentimental language of Larpenteur, that "the operation proved fatal to most of our patients." It seems never to have occurred to him that he and his abettors were red-handed violators of the Sixth Commandment. He goes on to say: "About fifteen days afterward there was such a stench in the fort that it could be smelt at a distance of 300 yards. It was awful — the scene in the fort, where some went crazy, and others were half eaten up by maggots before they died." This was during the hottest part of summer.

As if fate were bent on making the worst of a bad situation, the Indians began coming in to trade while the

epidemic was at its height. Halsey says that the fort was absolutely closed to them and they were entreated to keep away, but that probably the "air was infected" with the disease "for half a mile without the pickets." Larpenteur says that they did open the door to a celebrated chief, "but on showing him a little boy who had not recovered, and whose face was still one solid scab, by holding him over the pickets, the Indians finally concluded to leave." Whatever the facts, the fearful truth is that the pestilence got abroad. It first spread among the Assiniboines, who were the Indians that had come to the fort, and it raged among them until winter. Halsey, who left Union in October, says that at that time it was "raging with the greatest destructiveness imaginable — at least ten out of twelve die with it."

At Fort Union in these trying times one John Brazeau, a familiar name in those days on the upper rivers, was undertaker, and seemed to take a fiendish satisfaction in his new occupation. "How many?" Larpenteur would ask him of a morning now and then. "Only three, sir, but according to appearances at the hospital I think I shall have a full load tomorrow or next day." These two worthies missed their opportunity in life by coming upon the stage at the wrong time and place. They would have found a more congenial atmosphere among the gruesome scenes around the French guillotines of Ninety-Three (Chittenden).*

*At the present time we look with horror upon such an act as that of Halsey's, in thus inoculating these Indians with smallpox — nevertheless, there were extenuating circumstances in this case. It was at a period when vaccination had just come into general use. Doctor Jenner made his discovery in 1798, but it met with much opposition, especially in this country, and it was many years before it was generally practised. Unfortunately they had none of the new virus at the fort, and the old method, as practised by Halsey, was no doubt familiar to many. Previous to the discovery of Jenner, the practice was to inoculate from the smallpox pustule itself, not only in this country but Europe as well. The mortality under such conditions was far below that of an epidemic of the same disease. At the present day we hear little of this practice, although this method was exten-

In spite of the destructive ravages of the disease among the Assiniboines they still came in to trade, and the business did not fall off as much as had been expected. Larpenteur says that when the Indians were asked how it was, under the circumstances, that "there were so many robes brought in, they would say laughingly that they expected to die soon and wanted to have a frolic till the end came."

The pestilence reached the Blackfeet through another most culpable act of negligence on the part of the company's officers. An Indian of that nation was permitted to get on the "St. Peters" at the mouth of the Little Missouri and then to go to his people before it was known whether he had taken the disease or not. The Crow post, Van Buren, was also infected, most likely through other acts of negligence. The disease ran its usual course there, but the Crows were at the time on Wind River, and escaped until later in the fall. But before the end of the year all the tribes of the Missouri valley above the Sioux

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sively used. However, the mortality was, in many instances, somewhat greater than the mortality in vaccination, but not nearly so great as we might imagine. Doctor Thacher, a prolific writer on various subjects and a surgeon in the Revolutionary War, has left us a valuable record in his journal as to this practice and its results. His experience was quite extensive, as he inoculated hundreds of the soldiers while in the service, and very rarely indeed was the mortality over one per cent, and in the large majority of instances it was very much less. Their facilities for caring for these patients were very poor indeed; Thomas Jefferson had to come all the way from Virginia to Philadelphia for the sole purpose of being inoculated. The old method was very extensively used everywhere, before the benefit of Doctor Jenner's discovery was recognized. We do not justify its use at the present day, unless under special circumstances, but at the time Halsey was called upon to face the situation, it was quite another matter, and he was certainly justified in so far as the practice itself was concerned. He was culpably if not criminally negligent in his manner of carrying out the treatment. Whether these Indians were fit subjects, free from other diseases, and properly prepared, and whether the virus was taken from other than a perfectly healthy person, were points which he did not consider. The lack of proper facilities for caring for those who were inoculated and those suffering from the disease, and the carelessness as to proper isolation and disinfection during convalescence, also tended to increase the contagion. Some authorities claim that the infection may be carried through the air in all directions from two to five miles from its source. If the mortality was high in this case, it was as largely due to all these causes as to the disease itself.

had been stricken and the extent of the calamity was well-nigh appalling.

The Assiniboines were for declaring open war against the whites, to whom they rightfully, to a certain extent, attributed the visitation of the terrible pestilence; but they did not carry this threat into execution. The hostile Blackfeet, however, were completely humbled, some of them were about to begin a war on the whites when the scourge attacked them, which they interpreted as a judgment of Providence, for thus attempting to destroy their friends. The tribes as a rule accepted it in a philosophical manner, and did not attempt to retaliate on the whites, probably through fear of a still worse affliction.

It is next to impossible to ascertain the exact number of deaths during this memorable epidemic. Audubon, upon the authority of Mitchell, estimates it, among all tribes, at 150,000, a figure entirely too high. Another estimate was 60,000, also far too high. Chittenden places it at about 15,000, which, in view of all the circumstances and conditions, is probably very nearly correct. The tribes mostly affected were the Blackfeet, Crows, Assiniboines, Mandans, Minnetarees, and Aricaras.

The mortality of this epidemic has scarcely a parallel in the history of plagues, and fully justifies the quotation from the work of Maximilian: "The destroying angel has visited the unfortunate sons of the wilderness with terrors never before known, and has converted the extensive hunting-grounds, as well as the peaceful settlements of these tribes, into desolate and boundless cemeteries."*

I wish to make acknowledgment to Captain Hiram

*The disease which is making the greatest inroads on the Indian population at the present time and to which they seem peculiarly susceptible, more so than the white race, is that which is so much dreaded by all humanity, namely tuberculosis, in its various forms, more commonly known as consumption. When they are attacked with

Martin Chittenden, U. S. A., for data obtained from his excellent work, *History of the American Fur Trade of the Far West;* I am also under many obligations to Judge W. B. Douglas of St. Louis, who very kindly furnished the photographs of Captains Walker and Cerré, as well as the sketch of the latter, and to Irvin Ogden of Clearfield, Pa., a relative of Leonard's. Mrs. Victor's *River of the West,* Bancroft's History, Irving's works on this subject, as well as many other authorities have been consulted in the preparation of this volume.

W. F. WAGNER.

Washington, D. C., June 1, 1904.

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this disease they seem totally unable to resist the same and are carried away with extreme rapidity, much more quickly than the whites. These Indians mostly inhabit the western plains, where the climate is excellent and where the whites seldom develop bronchial or tubercular troubles, yet even here this disease is the greatest enemy to the poor Indian. It is largely due to his manner of living, and the lack of good hygienic and sanitary conditions. Many Indian children die between the age of one and six years, as after weaning little attention is paid to their diet. They get their livelihood from the family larder, and much of the time is one of feast or famine in which the ordinary milk and eggs are practically unknown. Thus the children become delicate and very frequently rachitic when if they are attacked with any more serious disease, they are in no condition whatever to resist the same.

LEONARD'S NARRATIVE

NARRATIVE

OF THE

ADVENTURES OF

ZENAS LEONARD,

A NATIVE OF CLEARFIELD COUNTY, PA. WHO SPENT FIVE YEARS IN TRAPPING FOR FURS, TRADING WITH THE INDIANS, &c., &c., OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS:

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED

BY D. W. MOORE,

CLEARFIELD, PA.

1839

PREFACE

THE title of the following work sufficiently explains itself; however, before presenting it to the public, in its present form, the publisher deems it necessary to accompany it with a few remarks explan[a]tory of the motives which induced the author to commit his adventures to paper:

Mr. ZENAS LEONARD (the author) is a native of Clearfield county, Pa., where his parents and other relatives still reside; and it may not be improper here to remark, that they are well known as among the most respectable inhabitants of the county.

After receiving the advantages of a common English education, and being possessed of strong mental faculties and a vigorous constitution, MR. LEONARD left his parental roof in the spring of 1830, and after spending the succeeding year in a mercantile house in Pittsburg, Pa.,* ventured

*It was in the following manner that the author of this book became engaged in the fur-trade as related to me by one of the family, and it was from this same cause that many other young men, who were of an adventurous disposition, found their way to the mountains, hoping that dame fortune would smile upon them. Zenas Leonard was the son of Abraham Leonard and Elizabeth (Armstrong) Leonard, born March 19, 1809, at Clearfield Creek, Bradford Township, three miles from Clearfield, the county-seat of Clearfield county, Pennsylvania. Up to his twenty-first year he worked on his father's farm, which we are led to believe was more fertile in stones than in crops. On the morning of his twenty-first birthday, he remarked to his father, "I can make my living without picking stones," to which his father replied that he was at perfect liberty to do so. He packed his scanty wardrobe and walked to Pittsburg, where he had an uncle, a Mr. Armstrong, who was engaged in the mercantile business, for whom he clerked for some months, and then resumed his journey to St. Louis and joined the company of Gant and Blackwell, as stated. It was probably at Pittsburg that he obtained his ideas of trapping and the mountains, and determined to visit this almost unknown country and paradise of trappers.

to embark in an expedition across the Rocky Mountains, in the capacity of Clerk to the company. The last letter received by his parents, left him at the extreme white settlement, where they were busily occupied in making preparations for the expedition to the mountains — from whence he promised to write at short intervals; but one misfortune after another happening the company, he was deprived of all sources of communication — so that no tidings were received of him until he unexpectedly returned to the scenes of his childhood, to the house of his father, in the fall of 1835 — after an absence of 5 years and 6 months!

In the interval, and at various times, rumors and answers to letters written by his friends to different individuals on the route up the Missouri, were received, which represented the major part of the company he was with, as having perished, and that he was not among the number who survived. The grief of his parents from that time until his joyous return, can only be imagined. They had long mourned him as lost forever, and all hope of again meeting him this side the grave ceased to exist. The Scriptural phrase, that *"the dead's alive, and the lost is found,"* in a temporal point of view, was never more beautifully illustrated; nor was ever grief and mourning changed to inexpressible joy and gladness more unexpectedly and triumphantly.

After again mingling with his former comrades and old acquaintances, so great was the curiosity manifested by them to hear him relate his adventures, that he was continually beset by crowds of anxious inquirers whereever he happened to be. But few were satisfied with a partial account, and finding that it would consume too much of the time he purposed spending among his former friends, ere he should again embark for the west, to re-

peat the whole story on every occasion, he finally yielded to the importunities of his friends to adopt Franklin's notion of "saying grace over the whole barrel of beef at once, in order to save time," and he prepared a narrative of his travels for publication in the newspapers of the county, that all might have an equal opportunity to read it. It was for this purpose, and under these circumstances, that he wrote it out — but from various causes it was never published entire, until we procured the manuscript last winter and gave it to the public through the columns of a public newspaper* during the past season. The great interest the public took in it, was satisfactorily illustrated by the increase and demand for the paper in which it was published. A number of persons sent in their names as subscribers from all the adjoining counties, besides others more distant — many of whom we were unable to accommodate. From this evidence, as well as the repeated solicitations from every quarter, we have been induced to re-print it, and now offer it to the public in a more convenient form.

Our author kept a minute journal of every incident that occurred, but unfortunately, a part of his narrative was stolen from him by hostile Indians; still, however, he was enabled to replace the most important events, by having access to the journal kept by the commander of the expedition. His character for candour and truth, among his acquaintances, we have never heard suspected; and, indeed, among the many who heard the narrative from his own lips, we have yet to hear the first one say they disbelieve it. At all events, in its persual, the reader will encounter no *improbabilities*, much less *impossibilities*: — hence it is but reasonable to suppose that in traversing such

*The *Clearfield Republican*, D. W. Moore, editor, who was also the publisher of the *Leonard Narrative* in book form. This paper is still in existence under the above name, the editor being John F. Short.

a wilderness as lays west of the Rocky Mountains, such hardships, privations and dangers as those described by MR. LEONARD, must necessarily be encountered.

He remained at home but a short time, when he returned to the west, and now resides in Jackson county, Mo., where he is surrounded with competence — being at present engaged as a merchant and trader with the different companies employed in the fur trade of the mountains.

THE PUBLISHER.

NARRATIVE

Of the adventures of a company of 70 *men, who left St. Louis in the Spring of* 1831, *on an expedition to the Rocky Mountains, for the purpose of trapping for Furs, and trading with the Indians, by one of the company,* MR. ZENAS LEONARD, *of Clearfield county, Pa.— comprising a minute description of the incidents of the adventure, and a valuable history of this immense territory — not from maps and charts, but from personal observation.*

THE Company under the command of Capt's. Gant and Blackwell,* left St. Louis on the 24th of April, 1831. Each man was furnished with the necessary equipments for the expedition — such as traps, guns, &c.; also horses and goods of various descriptions, to trade with the Indians for furs and Buffaloe robes. We continued our journey in a western direction, in the state of Missouri, on the south side of the Missouri river, through a country thinly inhabited by the whites and friendly Indians, until we arrived at Fort Osage the extreme point of the white settlement. Here we remained several days and purchased and packed up a sufficiency of provision, as we then thought; for our subsistance through the wilderness to what is called the Buffaloe country; a distance of about 200

*This firm built a post on the Upper Arkansas about six miles above Fountain Creek, in 1832. We know little or nothing of Blackwell, but Captain Gant was an experienced trapper and trader, and is said to have been the first hunter to enter into friendly relations with the Arapahoes. He succeeded in gaining their confidence and they were always thereafter uniformly friendly to the whites. While not aggressively warlike, they were good fighters, and were held in high respect by their enemies. They were a brave, candid, and honest people, and were much less addicted to beggary and thieving than were most other Indians.

miles. From thence we proceeded up the Missouri until we arrived at the mouth of the Kansas river, where we again tarried two or three days, for the purpose of trading some goods to the Kansas Indians for corn, moccasins, &c.

This tribe of Indians live in small huts, built of poles, covered with straw & dirt, and in shape are similar to a potatoe hole. They cultivate the soil quite extensively, and raise very good corn, pumpkins, beens and other vegetables. The principal chief is called "*White Ploom.*"—The nation is supposed to contain 800 warriors.

From thence we proceeded on our journey up the river. We found the country here beautiful indeed — abounding with the most delightful prairies, with here & there a small brook, winding its way to the river, the margins of which are adorned with the lofty Pine and Cedar tree. These prairies were completely covered with fine low grass, and decorated with beautiful flowers of various colors; and some of them are so extensive and clear of timber and brush that the eye might search in vain for an object to rest upon. I have seen beautiful and enchanting sceneries depicted by the artist, but never any thing to equal the work of rude nature in those prairies. In the spring of the year when the grass is green and the blossoms fresh, they present an appearance, which for beauty and charms, is beyond the art of man to depict.

We continued on our journey westward, up the republican fork* of Kanzas river — passing through these prairies, till the 20th of June, when we happened on an-

*This was not the regular route followed by traders in going to the mountains at this time. On leaving Independence they crossed the Kansas River near its mouth, followed up the Little Blue to its headwaters, thence to the river Platte, which they followed to the mountains or they frequently started from the mouth of the Platte and followed this river as stated. These were no doubt the better routes, as we shall see that this party met with some hardships, their provisions running very short, they met with but little game, and as a result suffered want before they reached the mountains.

other tribe of Indians, called the Otoes, from whom we obtained a quantity of sweet corn and some wild turnips; we also understood from this tribe that it was much farther to the Buffaloe country than we had before anticipated, and that game in that direction, was very scarce. From thence we proceeded in a N. W. direction, up the Republican Branch — finding but very little game; and on the 21st of June we killed our last beef, which was equally divided to each mess. Here we began to feel somewhat alarmed — starvation began to stare us in the face, and some of the company became refractory and were for turning back. Stimulated, however, by the hope of reaching game in a few days, we continued in the direction of the Buffaloe country. Hunters were sent out daily in quest of game, but as often returned without any. We still continued to travel — subsisting chiefly on muscles and small fish which we caught in the river; finally the Captain ordered two of the best horses to be killed, to keep the company from starving, which was immediately done, and the carcasses equally distributed to each mess. We proceeded on our journey slowly — sending out hunters as usual, but without success; game appeared to become scarcer and scarcer, and in a few days our provision (if I may call it such) again exhausted. Finding it impossible, owing to the scarcity of game, to continue any further up the Republican, we concluded to leave it and steer for the head waters of the Missouri.* Accordingly we changed our direction as well as our manner of travelling. Instead of travelling in a close mat as heretofore, we now scattered over a considerable range of country for the purpose of hunting, leaving ten or twelve men only to bring on the pack-mules, and at night we would collect together with

*The river Platte is no doubt the one here referred to, and not the Missouri.

our game, which generally consisted of wolves, wild cats, muscles, and some times an Antelope. In this way we continued our journey slowly, some of the company being half starved to death, for eight or ten days, eating at night what little game we caught through the day; at last we collected one evening, I think about the middle of July, in a barren prairie where we could not get wood enough to make a fire, much less any thing to cook on it — not a mouthfull of game was returned that evening. This was a trying time indeed — despondency & horror was depicted in the countenance of every man, and the enquiry, "what shall we do," was passed from every lip. In this condition, without fire or food, we spent the knight. In the morning we held a consultation to decide whether to continue in that direction or turn. We finally agreed to proceed straight ahead & by night we arrived on the banks of the river Platte, a distance of about ten miles from where we had encamped the night before, where we pitched our tents for the night. Most of our hunters had collected without game, and pronounced it very scarce, and we were about to kill another of our horses, when we saw one of our hunters approaching us with unusual rapidity, without his gun or hat and his countenance indicating great excitement. I never wish to feel more pleasure than I did as he rushed into the tent exclaiming, "I have killed two big Buck Elk!" Early the next morning — refreshed with what meat we had obtained and animated and encouraged with the hope of obtaining plenty more, we set out with unusual fine spirits. We continued to travel up the river Platte for several days — passing through extensive barren prairies, the soil being too poor even to produce grass; and game exceedingly scarce. Some of us again became alarmed, and one morning when

the roll was called it was discovered that two of the company had stolen two of the best horses and started back to the state of Missouri. This had a bad effect — it impaired that full confidence which had heretofore existed between the members of the company, but we continued up the river and in a few days arrived at the Buffaloe country. After encamping, on a pleasant evening, in the latter part of July, some of the company discovered two Buffaloe bulls feeding in the prairie, about half a mile from camp. Four or five of us immediately mounted our horses and started to take them; but returned in a short time without success — one of the men having got his arm broken, by falling from his horse. But the next day we happened on a large drove of these animals, and killed six or seven of them. The flesh of the Buffaloe is the wholesomest and most palatable of meat kind. The male of these animals are much the largest — weighing from 1000 to 1500 pounds, and may be seen in droves of hundreds feeding in the plains. We remained here several days feasting upon Buffaloe meat. From thence proceeded up the river; finding an abundance of game, such as Buffaloe, Elk, Deer and Antelope — and killing more or less every day. On the first day of August* we arrived at the forks of the river Platte; and by means of boats made of buffaloe skins, crossed the south Fork and continued our journey up the valley. Here the soil appeared to be very poor, producing but little grass; and in some places for three or four miles we would travel over sand plains where there was scarcely a spear of grass to be seen. Immediately on the water courses the soil is better and produces good grass. As we travelled up the river, we occasionally came in contact with cliffs of rock and hard clay, from two to three hundred

*If Leonard's dates are correct they made an extremely slow passage to this point.

feet above the level of the plain. One of these cliffs is very peculiar in its appearance, and is known among the whites as "Chimney cliff," and among the natives as "Elk Peak." It is only about 150 yards in circumference at its basis, and about 25 at the summit; and projects into the air to the heighth of 300 feet. Its towering summit may be seen at the distance of 15 or 20 miles — presenting the appearance of some huge fabric that had been constructed by the art of man.

We continued to travel in a western direction — found game plenty — met with no difficulty in getting along; and on the 27th of August we arrived at the junction of the Laramies river with the river Platte* — about 12 or 1300 miles from the United States, and two or three hundred from the top of the Rocky Mountains. Here we stopped for the purpose of reconnoitering. Several scouting parties were sent out in search of Beaver signs, who returned in a few days and reported that they had found Beaver signs,† &c. Capt. Gant then gave orders to make

*The route followed after reaching the Platte to the mouth of the Laramie later became a portion of the celebrated Oregon Trail, and Chimney Rock one of its most celebrated landmarks. The junction of these two rivers became later quite a trading center in the fur-trade, near which was located Fort William, Fort John, Fort Platte, and at a short distance Fort Laramie.

†The American beaver (*Castor Canadensis*) is a small animal, of very striking appearance and of amphibious habits. He is never found except near watercourses, and only near those which are lined with trees or shrubs. As with the whole animal kingdom, his peculiar methods of life are directed to the objects of subsistence, protection, and shelter. This animal, with his family, lives in lodges which are built on or near the shore, and the living-room is in the attic above the water, but with a submerged entrance, opening out into the stream. In very small streams where the water is very shallow and not sufficient to conceal the entrance, or protect it from the ice in winter, this intelligent little animal builds his dam in order to increase the depth of the water. This part of his domestic economy makes the beaver an unique creature in the animal world. It is the wonder of engineers how it is possible for him to accomplish what he does. It is true, the dams are never high, only two or three feet, and much oftener less, but even for that height it is astonishing how such structures can withstand the pressure against them, for they are nothing but masses of sticks piled together in all directions and plastered with mud. They are very effective, however, and nature soon strengthens them by causing shrubbery to grow upon them until finally they are so firmly interwoven with roots that they resist the

preparations for trapping. Accordingly the company was divided into parties of from 15 to 20 men in each party, with their respective captains placed over them — and directed by Captain Gant in what direction to go. Captain Washburn ascended the Timber Fork; Capt. Stephens

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greatest floods. Moreover, the beaver believes in maintaining what he has built, and so he goes over his work, making, late in the season when the family is ready to house themselves for the winter, regular annual repairs, both upon the dam and his lodge. The wonderful cutting of the trees by the beaver has a threefold purpose — the construction of the dam, the building of his house, and a food supply. The diet of this animal is entirely vegetable, particularly the bark of trees, young shoots, and the like. A large supply of sticks is gathered in the fall, sufficient for his use in winter. As the bark is gnawed from these during the winter they are carried out of the lodge and thrown either upon the dam for use in reinforcing it or into the stream below, which carries them away.

The beaver is often given more credit for sagacity in felling trees than he deserves. One has but to examine his work to see that he has comparatively little idea of the art as a successful woodsman practices it. He gnaws around the entire circumference of a tree, which would, if standing perfectly straight, have no influence whatever in directing its fall. As a matter of fact almost all trees along streams lean more or less over the stream, and naturally fall in that direction. The beaver shows no natural instinct in this unless it be in the matter of selecting those trees that have a decided inclination from the vertical and in the direction in which he wishes them to fall.

With that wonderful adaptation which nature shows in all her works, the anatomical make-up of the beaver is admirably suited to his mode of life. For cutting wood he has four powerful incisor teeth, two in each jaw, deeply planted, and curved in shape, the upper ones being something more than a semicircle, and the lower ones something less. The powerful muscles of the jaw enable him to do this work, while extraordinary salivary glands provide the means for digesting his peculiarly dry and hard food. The tail, like a powerful sculling oar, makes him a very successful and expert navigator, while it enables him, with the further aid of his peculiarly shaped hind legs, to sit bolt upright when engaged in the work of tree cutting.

As beaver fur was the great staple of the fur-trade, and widely sought after, trappers became very expert in their knowledge of the habits of the industrious little animal and the best methods of capturing him. They could at once tell, from the appearance of the lodge, the probable number of inmates and where they could most successfully entrap them. The universal mode of taking the beaver was with the steel trap, in the use of which long experience had taught the hunters great skill. The trap is very strong, weighing about five pounds, and was valued during the fur-trade period at twelve to sixteen dollars. The chain attached to the trap is about five feet long, with a swivel near the end to keep it from kinking. The trapper, in setting the trap, wades into the stream, so that his tracks may not be apparent, plants his trap in three or four inches of water a little way from the bank, and fastens the chain to a strong stick, which he drives into the bed of the stream at the full chain length from the trap. Immediately over the trap a little twig is set so that one end shall be about four inches above the surface of the water. On this is put a peculiar bait, supplied by the animal itself, castor, castorum, or musk, the odor of which has a great attraction for the beaver. To reach the bait he raises his mouth toward it and in this act brings his feet directly under it; in this manner he treads upon the trap, springs it, and is caught. In his fright he seeks concealment by his

the Laramies; Capt. Gant the Sweet Water — all of which empty into the river Platte near the same place. Each

usual method of diving into deep water, but finds himself held by the chain which he cannot gnaw in two, and after an ineffectual struggle, he sinks to the bottom and is drowned. Not infrequently he wrests the chain from the stake, drags the trap to deeper water before he succumbs, or, taking it to the shore becomes entangled in the undergrowth. In such instances he causes the trapper a great deal of trouble and annoyance, particularly if he is compelled to wade deep streams in very cold weather.

Generally the beaver skin was removed near the place of capture, and only the skin, tail, and castorum glands were taken to the camp. Here other persons than the trapper attended to the work of cleaning, dressing, curing, and properly marking the skins. On an average it took about eighty skins to make up a pack of one hundred pounds, the value of which was from three to five hundred dollars in the mountains. The packs were prepared with the utmost care, the choice skins being placed on the inside. The great value of this property caused it to be guarded with much care and caution, as a single Indian could carry away, unaided, the rich return of a whole year's hard toil.

The flesh of the beaver, except the tail, was not as a rule used as food unless there was a great scarcity of other meat or supplies. The tail has always been considered one of the richest delicacies which the mountains afford, being more highly esteemed by the mountain-men than the most prized parts of the buffalo. Another article much sought after which had a commercial value is secreted by two small glands in the body, and was known in the mountains as castorum, and in commerce as castor. In the mountains it had a value of about three dollars per pound. It was used chiefly as beaver bait, and thus this harmless little animal innocently furnished the means for alluring to destruction his companions.

The extensive use of beaver fur in the early years of the nineteenth century caused an immense exportation from America to Europe, reaching as high as 200,000 skins annually. This great drain led to the rapid extermination of this little animal. It so happened, however, that at the time when this process had begun to show its effects, an unfavorable change came over the beaver market of Europe which helped to counteract it. Silk largely supplanted the use of beaver fur in the manufacture of hats, while other kinds of fur took its place in other uses. John Jacob Astor who amassed an immense fortune largely through the fur-trade and who was really the American Fur Company, in a letter to Pierre Chouteau, Jr., comments on this use of silk, and the injury which might result to the fur-trade; this might have had some influence on his withdrawing from the trade about this time. The price fell so that trapping was no longer profitable, and nature, responding to the relief thus produced, began to recuperate her forces. In later years, although the price of beaver did not fully recover, its exportation began to increase, until it finally very nearly reached its former magnitude. The beaver fur is one of the finest which nature produces, and was in fact the currency of the Rocky Mountains in the fur-trading days. The average price was about four dollars per pound, and as the timid little animal was covered with from one to two pounds, the premium for his destruction was from four to ten dollars, depending on the market.

The streams of the West swarmed with the beaver, as did the plains with the buffalo; both furnished the trader and trapper with wealth, scarcely less great than do now the gold and silver mines of the great states of Colorado and Wyoming, which lay under their very feet and of which they never dreamed. Had the gold-producing pelts from the streams as well as from the plains, been gathered with some regard to renewing by natural increase those removed, these two species might not be so nearly extinct as they are at the present time.

of these companies were directed to ascend these rivers until they found Beaver sufficiently plenty for trapping, or till the snow and cold weather compelled them to stop; at which event they were to return to the mouth of the Laramies river, to pass the winter together. While at this place, engaged in secreting our merchandize, which we did by digging a hole in the ground, sufficiently large to contain them, and covering them over so that the Indians might not discover them*—four men (three whites and one Indian) came to our tent. This astonished us not a little, for a white man was the last of living beings that we expected to visit us in this vast wilderness — where nothing was heard from dark to day light but the fierce and terrifying growls of wild beasts, and the more shrill cries of the merciless savages. The principal of these men was a Mr. Fitzpatrick,† who had been engaged in trapping along the Columbia river, on the west side of the Rocky mountains, & was then on his way to St. Louis. He was an old hand at the business and we expected to obtain some useful information from him, but we were disappointed. The selfishness of man is often disgraceful to human nature; and I never saw more striking evidence of this fact, than was presented in the conduct of this man Fitzpatrick. Notwithstanding we had treated him with

*This was a very common method of concealing goods and is known as a "cache" (a French word handed down from the early Canadian traders and trappers), the best site for which is on a slight elevation where the soil is dry. The pit is lined with leaves and sticks and the goods are deposited. All, but especially the most perishable, are protected with the utmost care, the next great object being to conceal it from the prying eyes of the Indians, which is done by replacing the sod very carefully and throwing the soil into the near-by stream, or by building the camp-fire over it, or having the animals tramp over it. In this manner all signs of it are obliterated.

†Leonard is in error as to the movements of Fitzpatrick at this time. According to his statement he left the west side of the mountains where he had been trapping on the Columbia or Snake River to make the journey to St. Louis, and arrived at the mouth of the Laramie River about the 3rd of September, 1831, where Captain Blackwell joined him and they continued their journey to St. Louis. Here he remained until the following year, gathering together an outfit and men.

great friendship and hospitality, merely because we were to engage in the same business with him, which he knew we never could exhaust or even impair — he refused to give us any information whatever, and appeared disposed to treat us as intruders. On the 3d of September, Captain

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On July 1st, 1832, according to Leonard, Fitzpatrick again appears at the mouth of the Laramie on his return from St. Louis, with 115 men and supplies, where Leonard's company of Gant's men join him, and they continue on to the rendezvous of 1832 at Pierre's Hole.

Leonard is greatly in error as to the above; we fortunately have the exact movements of Fitzpatrick during this period, which were as follows:

After Fitzpatrick and his partners purchased the interest of Smith, Sublette and Jackson in the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, in August, 1830, Fitzpatrick and two partners with 200 men moved north through the Bighorn valley, crossed the Yellowstone River to the Great Falls of the Missouri, thence to the three forks, and following up the Jefferson branch to the divide, came to Ogden's Hole near Great Salt Lake. They then crossed the country in a northeast direction to the Powder River valley before winter set in (1830-31). In the spring of 1831 they set out again for the Blackfeet country, but about this time Fitzpatrick, with one companion, started for St. Louis overland, and passed Council Bluffs April 19, 1831. As Leonard left St. Louis April 24th of the same year, Fitzpatrick must have arrived there about the time the latter was leaving on his journey to the Laramie River. While Fitzpatrick was at the latter place he was prevailed upon by Smith, Sublette, and Jackson to accompany them to Santa Fé and take his outfit from this point to the mountains. It was on this expedition that Smith lost his life, and while Leonard was on his journey to the mouth of the Laramie, Fitzpatrick was on his way to Santa Fé. After much delay at the latter place, Fitzpatrick started north along the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, and arrived at the mouth of the Laramie about the close of the year 1831 (much later than September 3rd, as stated by Leonard). Owing to Fitzpatrick's delay, Fraeb was sent in search of him, and found him shortly after he reached the Platte River, when they at once bent their course towards the Powder River country, as elsewhere stated. In order to avoid the American Fur Company, he quietly stole out of the country, and went to the forks of the Snake River where he spent the winter of 1831-32 with the Nez Percés and Flatheads.

In the spring of 1832, Fitzpatrick and his partners set out on their spring hunt in the Snake River valley, then to the Salt River country after which they crossed over to the John Grey River, thence to Bear River valley; here they again find the representatives of the American Fur Company, and after the spring hunt assemble at the rendezvous in the valley of Pierre's Hole. Here again Vanderburgh and Drips of the American Fur Company made their appearance.

William L. Sublette had the contract this year to furnish the annual supplies to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, and it became necessary that they should arrive before those of the American Fur Company. It was therefore decided that Fitzpatrick should go to meet Sublette and hurry him forward. Fitzpatrick was a very active man; he set out at once and met the caravan on the Platte River below the mouth of the Laramie. He thus again passes this important point, and in returning with the outfit, reaches the mouth of this river again on June 13th, when he picks up the company of Gant's men of which Leonard was one, and states they had experienced an unfortunate trapping season. After leaving this point, Fitzpatrick met with the thrilling adventure as related by Leonard, and in the course of time they all arrived at the rendezvous of Pierre's Hole.

Blackwell, with two others, joined Fitzpatrick, and started back to the state of Missouri, for an additional supply of merchandise, and were to return in the summer of 1832.

I was one of 21 that composed the company under the command of Capt. A. K. Stephens, a man well calculated to pilot or manage in case of difficulty with the Indians. He received a portion of the profits arising from the merchandize, say $2 per pound for Coffee, and the same for Tea, Shugar, Lead, Powder, Tobacco, Allspice, Pepper, &c., and for every yard of coarse cloth $10, and for fine cloth $20; this, however, is governed entirely by their value with the Indians. For twenty or thirty loads of powder you can generally get from eight to twelve dollars worth of fur.

On the 4th of September, having every thing in readiness, after shaking hands all around, we separated, each party to meander the rivers that had been respectively allotted to them, with the intention, if nothing happened them, of re-assembling in the latter part of December, to spend the winter together.

Mr. Stephen's party commenced their tour up the Laramies river and continued several days without any important occurrence. Found the prairies or plains in this direction very extensive — unobstructed with timber or brush — handsomely situated, with here and there a small creek passing through them, and in some places literally covered with game, such as Buffaloe, White and Black tailed Deer, Grizzly, Red, and White Bear, Elk, Prairie Dog, wild Goat, Big horned mountain Sheep, Antelope, &c.

On the 20th of Sept. we stopped on the bank of a small creek, to let our horses graze, at the junction of which we seen signs of beaver. Two hunters were sent up this stream with their traps and guns

on search of beaver, who, if they should be successful in finding game, were not to return until the next day — the main body of the company to move on slowly. After travelling several miles, & hearing nothing of our hunters, we deemed it advisable to encamp for the night, which we did. About midnight we were alarmed by the report of two rifles. Supposing it to be hostile Indians, we put ourselves in an attitude of defence, as soon as possible by throwing up a fort of logs and brush, and keeping up sentinels until morning. On the next morning, about sun rise the two hunters came in, and informed us that it was the report of their guns that had alarmed us, as they had fired them off near the spot where they had expected to find the camp, with the hope of receiving some signal. They had meandered the creek till they came to beaver dams, where they set their traps and turned their horses out to pasture; and were busily engaged in constructing a camp to pass the night in, when they discovered, at a short distance off, a tremendous large Grizzly Bear, rushing upon them at a furious rate. — They immediately sprang to their rifles which were standing against a tree hard-by, one of which was single and the other double triggered; unfortunately in the hurry, the one that was accustomed to the single trigger, caught up the double triggered gun, and when the bear came upon him, not having set the trigger, he could not get his gun off; and the animal approaching within a few feet of him, he was obliged to commence beating it over the head with his gun. Bruin, thinking this rather rough usage, turned his attention to the man with the single triggered gun, who, in trying to set the trigger (supposing he had the double triggered gun) had fired it off, and was also obliged to fall to beating the ferocious animal with his gun; finally, it left them without doing much injury, except tearing the sleeve off one of their

coats and biting him through the hand. Four men were immediately despatched for the traps, who returned in the evening with seven or eight beaver. The Grizzly Bear is the most ferocious animal that inhabits these prairies, and are very numerous. They no sooner see you than they will make at you with open mouth. If you stand still, they will come within two or three yards of you, and stand upon their hind feet, and look you in the face, if you have fortitude enough to face them, they will turn and run off; but if you turn they will most assuredly tear you to pieces; furnishing strong proof of the fact, that no wild beast, however daring and ferocious, unless wounded, will attack the face of man.

On the morning of the 22d Sept. we again renewed our tour travelling at the rate of 8 or 10 miles a day; catching a few Beaver, as we passed along — nothing strange occurring until the 30th, when we arrived at the foot of a great mountain, through which the Laramies passes. We attempted to follow the river through the mountain, but we soon found this to be impossible, as the bluffs of huge rocks projecting several hundred feet high, closed it to the very current. We then turned down the side of the mountain, on search of a place to cross it. On the 1st day of Oct. we came to a Buffaloe trail crossing the mountain, and after ascending to near the summit, we encamped for the night. About midnight it commenced snowing, and continued to fall so fast that we were obliged to remain there until the morning of the 4th, when we again renewed our journey, and in the evening we arrived in the valley on the North or West side of the mountain. Here, finding no snow & Beaver signs plenty, we deemed it advisable to remain a few days for the purpose of trapping, and the first night we caught 20 Beaver. We remained here until the 12th, when we proceeded eight

or ten miles further up the South fork of the river, and again encamped for the purpose of trapping. On the 18th, finding Beaver getting rather scarce, we proceeded a few miles further up the valley, and encamped again.

This valley is supposed to be 70 or 80 miles long, and from 10 to 15 miles wide; and is enclosed on the one side by the main chain of the Rocky Mountains, and on the other by great Piney Hills, running out from the main body of the mountain, with the river Laramies passing through the centre of it, the banks of which are covered with timber, from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile wide. Out side of this timber, the plain is completely smooth; and on a clear morning, by taking a view with a spyglass, you can see the different kinds of game that inhabit these plains, such as Buffaloe, Bear, Deer, Elk, Antelope, Bighorn, Wolves, &c. These plains are poor, sandy and level — the grass thin and short.

Oct. 22d. The nights getting somewhat cold, and snow falling more or less every day, we began to make preparations to return to our winter quarters, at the mouth of Laramies river; and on the 25th commenced our tour down the river. On the 28th we arrived at the mountain, that we crossed going up, but found it impossible, owing to the enormous depth of the snow to pass over it. On the morning of the 30th we started a number of men up and down the valley, on search of a place to cross the mountain, who returned the next day and reported that they had found no passing place over the mountain; when under these circumstances a majority of the company decided in favor of encamping in this valley for the winter, and when the ice melted out of the river, in the spring, commence trapping until such times as the snow melted off the mountain; when we would return to the mouth of the river, where we had secreted our goods.

On the 1st day of November we commenced travelling up the valley, on search of a suitable place to pass the winter, and on the evening of the 4th, we arrived at a large grove of Cottonwood timber, which we deemed suitable for encamping in. — Several weeks were spent in building houses, stables, &c. necessary for ourselves, and horses during the winter season. — This being done, we commenced killing Buffaloe, and hanging up the choice pieces to dry, so that if they should leave the valley we would have a sufficient quantity of meat to last us until spring. We also killed Deer, Bighorn Sheep, Elk, Antelope, &c., and dressed the hides to make moccasins.

About the 1st of December finding our horses getting very poor, we thought it necessary to commence feeding them on Cottonwood bark; for which purpose each man turned out and pealed and collected a quantity of this bark, from the grove in which we were encamped for his horses; but to our utter surprise and discomfiture, on presenting it to them they would not eat it, and upon examining it by tasting, we found it to be the bitter, instead of the sweet Cottonwood. Immediately upon finding we were deceived, men were despatched up and down the valley, on search of Sweet Cottonwood, but returned without success. Several weeks were spent in fruitless exertion to obtain feed for our horses; finally we were compelled to give it up, and agreed that our horses must all starve to death. The great depth of the snow, and the extreme coldness of the weather, soon prevented our horses from getting any thing to subsist upon, & they commenced dying. It seldom happened during all our difficulties, that my sympathies were more sensibly touched, than on viewing these starving creatures. I would will-

ingly have divided my provision with my horses, if they would have eat it.

On new-yearsday, notwithstanding our horses were nearly all dead, as being fully satisfied that the few that were yet living must die soon, we concluded to have a feast in our best style; for which purpose we made preparation by sending out four of our best hunters, to get a choice piece of meat for the occasion. These men killed ten Buffaloe, from which they selected one of the fattest humps they could find and brought in, and after roasting it handsomely before the fire, we all seated ourselves upon the ground, encircling, what we there called a splendid repast to dine upon. Feasting sumptuously, cracking a few jokes, taking a few rounds with our rifles, and wishing heartily for some liquor, having none at that place we spent the day.

The glorious 8th* arrived, the recollection of the achievements of which, are calculated to gladden the hearts of the American people; but it was not so glorious to us. We found our horses on that day, like Packenham's forces, well nigh defunct. Here we were in this valley, surrounded on either side by insurmountable barriers of snow, with all our merchandize and nothing to pack it upon, but two mules — all the rest of our horses being dead. For ourselves we had plenty to eat, and were growing fat and uneasy;—but how we were to extricate ourselves from this perilous situation, was a question of deep and absorbing interest to each individual. About the 10th we held a consultation, to decide what measures should be taken for our relief. Mr. Stephens, our pilot, having been at Santafee,† in New Mexico, some 8 or 10 years

*This was the anniversary of the battle of New Orleans.

†Probably with the caravan of 1824 which left Franklin, Missouri, May 15. Mr. Marmaduke, afterwards governor of Missouri, and

previous, informed the company that horses in that place, were very cheap; and that he was of the opinion he could take them to it, if they saw proper to follow him. It was finally agreed upon by the company, that a part of them should start for Santafee; but not, however, without a good deal of confusion; as many were of the opinion that the snow on the mountain in the direction of Santafee, would be found to be as insurmountable, as in the direction of their merchandize, and also that the distance was too great to attempt to travel on foot, at that season of the year. It appearing from the maps to be little short of 800 miles.

On the morning of the 14th, finding every thing in readiness for our Santafee trip, we set out, each man with his bedding, rifle and nine Beaver skins, packed upon his back; leaving four men only to take care of our merchandize, and the two mules. The beaver skins we took for the purpose of trading to the inhabitants of Santafee for horses, mules, &c. We appointed from the middle of April till the middle of may, as our time for returning; and if we did not return within that time, our four men were to wait no longer, but return to the mouth of the Laramies river, to meet the rest of the company. We continued in the direction of Santafee, without any extraordinary occurrence, for several days — found game plenty and but little snow, until we arrived at the foot of a great mountain, which appeared to be totally covered with snow. Here we thought it advisable to kill and jirk some buffaloe meat, to eat while crossing this mountain, after which we continued our course; finding much difficulty in travelling, owing to the stormy weather & deep snow — so

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Augustus Storrs who was the following year sent to Santa Fé as the first consul, were with the expedition. They made a very successful trade.

much so indeed, that had it not been for a path made by the buffaloe bulls it would have been impossible to travel.

The channel of the river where it passed through these mountains is quite narrow in places and the banks very steep. In such places the beaver build their dams from bank to bank; and when they become old the beaver leave them and they break and overflow the ground, which then produces a kind of flag grass. In the fall of the year, the Buffaloe collect in such places to eat this grass, and when the snow falls too deep they retreat to the plains; and it was in these trails that we ascended the mountain.

We still continued our course along this buffaloe path, which led us to the top of the mountain; nothing occurring more than it continued to snow day and night. On the 25th we arrived on the top of the mountain, and wishing to take a view of the country, if it should cease snowing. In the morning it still continued to snow so rapidly that we were obliged to remain in camp all day, and about the middle of the day, we eat the last of our jirk, and that evening we were obliged to go to bed supperless.

On the 29th it still continued to snow, and having nothing to eat, we thought it high time to be making some move, for our preservation, or we must perish in this lonely wilderness. The question then arose, shall we return to the valley from whence we came, or continue in the direction of Santafee. This question caused considerable disturbance. Those who were in favor of going ahead, argued that it was too far back to game — that it would be impossible to return before starving to death; while those who were for returning contended that it was the highth of imprudence, to proceed in the direction of Santafee. Accordingly we made preparations, and started. We travelled across the summit of the mountain, where we found a

plain about a mile wide, which with great difficulty, owing to the fierceness of the wind, we succeeded in crossing; but when we attempted to go into the timber, on the opposite side from the mountain, we found it impossible, in consequence of the depth of the snow, and were obliged to turn back and re-cross the plain. As we returned by the fire we had made going over the plain the first time, we halted for the purpose of mutually deciding what to do; when it was determined by the company, that we would, if possible, return to our four men & two mules. We then started on search of the buffaloe path which we had followed to the top of the mountain; but owing to the strong wind, that had blew for several days, and the increased depth of the snow, it was invisible. We then attempted to travel in the snow without the path, but we found this equally as impossible, as in the direction of Santafee.

Here we were, in a desolate wilderness, uninhabited (at that season of the year) by even the hardy savage or wild beast — surrounded on either side by huge mountains of snow, without one mouthful to eat, save a few beaver skins — our eyes almost destroyed by the piercing wind, and our bodies at times almost buried by the flakes of snow which were driven before it. Oh! how heartily I wished myself at home; but wishing, in such a case appeared useless — action alone could save us. We had not even leather to make snow shoes, but as good fortune would have it, some of the men had the front part of their pantaloons lined with deer skin, and others had great coats of different kinds of skin, which we collected together to make snow shoes of. This appeared to present to us the only means of escape from starvation and death. After gathering up every thing of leather kind that could be found, we got to making snow shoes, and by morning each

man was furnished with a pair. But what were we to subsist upon while crossing the mountain, was a painful question that agitated every bosom, and employed every tongue in company. Provision, we had none, of any description; having eaten every thing we had that could be eat with the exception of a few beaver skins, and, after having fasted several days, to attempt to travel the distance of the valley, without any thing to eat, appeared almost worse than useless. Thinking, however, that we might as well perish one place as another, and that it was the best to make an exertion to save ourselves; and after each man had selected two of the best beaver skins to eat as he travelled along, we hung the remainder upon a tree, and started to try our fortune with the snow shoes. Owing to the softness of the snow, and the poor construction of our snow shoes, we soon found this to be a difficult and laborious mode of travelling. The first day after we started with our snow shoes we travelled but three or four miles and encamped for the night, which, for want of a good fire, we passed in the most distressing manner. Wood was plenty but we were unable to get it, and it kept one or two of the men busy to keep what little fire we had from going out as it melted the snow and sunk down. On the morning (30th Jan.) after roasting and eating some of our beaver skins, we continued our journey through the snow. In this way we continued to travel until the first day of February, in the afternoon, when we came to where the crust on the snow was sufficiently strong to carry us. Here we could travel somewhat faster, but at the best not much faster than a man could crawl on his hands and feet, as some of the men from hunger and cold were almost insensible of their situation, and so weak that they could scarcely stand on their feet, much less walk at speed. As

we approached the foot of the mountain the snow became softer and would not carry us. This caused the most resolute despair, as it was obviously impossible, owing to extreme weakness, for us to wade much further through the snow. As we moved down the mountain plunging and falling through the snow, we approached a large spruce or cedar tree, the drooping branches of which had prevented the snow from falling to the ground about its trunk —here we halted to rest. While collected under the sheltering bows of this tree, viewing, with horrified feelings, the wayworn, and despairing countenances of each other, a Mr. Carter, a Virginian, who was probably the nighest exhausted of any of the company, burst into tears and said, "here I must die." This made a great impression upon the remainder of the company, and they all, with the exception of a Mr. Hockday and myself, despaired of going any further. Mr. Hockday, however, after some persuasion, telling them that if they had strength to follow us we would break the road as far as possible, if not out to the valley, succeeded in getting them started once more.— Mr. Hockday was a large muscular man, as hardy as a mule and as resolute as a lion; yet kind and affectionate. He was then decidedly the stoutest man in the company, and myself, probably, the next stoutest. As for our Captain, Mr. Stephens, he was amongst the weakest of the company.

We resumed our journey, and continued to crawl along through the deep snow slowly till the evening of the fourth, when we arrived in the plain at the foot of the mountain. Here we found the snow so shallow that we could dispense with the use of our snow shoes; and while in the act of taking them off some of the men discovered, at the distance of 70 or 80 yards; two animals feeding in the brush,

which they supposed to be buffaloe, but from blindness, caused by weakness and pine smoke, could not be positive. Mr. Hockday and I were selected to approach and kill one of the animals without regard to what they might prove to be, while the remainder of the company were to go to a neighboring grove of timber and kindle a fire. Having used our guns as walking canes in the snow, we found them much out of order, and were obliged to draw out the old loads and put in new ones, before attempting to shoot. After taking every precaution we deemed necessary to insure success, we started and crawled along on our hands and knees, until we approached within ten or fifteen steps of the animals, when Mr. Hockday prepared to shoot; but upon finding that he could not see the sight of the gun or hold it at arms length, forbore, and proposed to me to shoot. I accordingly fixed myself and pulled trigger. My gun missed fire! I never was so wrecked with agitation as at that moment. "There," said I, "our game is gone, and we are not able to follow it much further;" but as good fortune had it, the Buffaloe, (for such we had discovered them to be,) did not see nor smell us, and after raising their heads out of the snow, and looking around for a few moments for the cause of the noise, again commenced feeding. I then picked the flint of my gun, fired and broke the back of one of the Buffaloe, my ball not taking effect within 18 inches of where I thought I aimed.—The men in the grove of timber, on hearing the report of my rifle came staggering forth to learn the result, and when they received the heart-cheering intelligence of success they raised a shout of joy. It was amusing to witness the conduct of some of the men on this occasion. Before we had caught the buffaloe they appeared scarcely able to speak — but a moment after that, were able to hollow like Indians at war.

I will not describe the scene that followed here — the reader may imagine it — an account of it would be repulsive and offensive rather than agreeable. This was the ninth day since we had eaten any thing but dried beaver skins. We remained at this place four days feasting upon the carcass of this Buffaloe, during which time we recruited considerably in strength and spirits, and on the 8th we resumed our journey down the river in search of our four men and two mules, and soon landed in the valley where game was plenty, and but little snow to obstruct our march. We continued our journey, killing plenty of game and living well, without any strange occurrence until the 14th, when we halted within a short distance of our old camp, and sent two or three of our worst looking men ahead to see whether they would be recognized by the four men. They were not known immediately on arriving at the camp, but no sooner engaged in conversation than they were recognized by the four men, and heartily welcomed back.*

Here we remained at our old station until the 14th of March, during which period, having plenty of good buffaloe meat to eat, we regained our usual health and appearance. Anxious to be doing something, eight of us made preparations to start again to Santefee for horses. We were to travel south, along the foot of the mountain till we came to a certain river which heads in the mountain near where we had hung the beaver skins on the pine tree; after finding this river we were to commence trapping, and also to endeavor to get the beaver fur off the mountain into the valley. The balance of the company, 13 in number, were to remain at the camp and secrete the merchandize, and then follow us to this river, where we were to

*They had been following up the Laramie River, which flows from the southwest and led them directly into the mountains. This would have been an extremely hazardous journey at this season.

meet; and if we had succeeded in getting the beaver skins off the mountain, we were to join together and proceed in the direction of Santefee. With this understanding we started, and pursued our course slowly along the base of the mountain — found game plenty — met with no obstacle to impede our march, and on the 20th we arrived on the bank of the river. After remaining here a few days the ice melted out of the creeks and we commenced and continued to trap for beaver until the 28th during which time we caught a fine quantity of fur, and built ourselves a wigwam after the Indian fashion.* The weather continuing warm and pleasant, and having a large quantity of dried meat on hand we concluded to hide our traps, beaver skins, baggage, &c., in our wigwam and pack a portion of the jirked meat on our backs and make an effort to get the beaver skins off the pine tree where we had left them in January. We started, and after travelling up the river along the side of the mountain for two or three days, we came in contact with huge mountains of snow and insurmountable icebergs, and were compelled to abandon our course & return back again to the plain. When we had arrived within a short distance of our wigwam, on our return, we discovered several trails of moccasin tracks

*The custom with the trapper was to make a spring and fall hunt. Most of the beaver, as well as other fur-bearing animals, were taken during these two seasons. In the summer the fur was not in good condition, and the trapper during this time of inactivity made his annual visit to the rendezvous, or some trading-post, in order to settle his accounts for the year, and to get such additional supplies as he might need, when he again returned to his field of operations for the fall season. The winters were usually too severe for him to follow his vocation, the traveling extremely difficult and dangerous, while the streams were mostly frozen over and the beaver hibernating in their lodges. During this period the trapper was driven into winter quarters, which he selected in some comfortable locality well sheltered and safe; here he passed the winter season entirely alone or if possible he had a companion with him. It was extremely lonesome and very trying to the hunter, who could find very little to do whereby to while away the long and lonely winter nights. It is a well-known fact among trappers, that a severe winter adds much to the quality of the furs, and those taken in the spring are better than those taken in the fall season.

in the snow. Some of the company became somewhat alarmed at these signs, supposing them to be the trails of hostile Indians — others appeared rejoiced, and said it was the remainder of our company. — The dispute was soon decided, for on arriving at our wigwam, we found it completely robbed of every thing we had left in it — traps, blankets, beaver skins and other utensils were all gone — nothing remained but the naked frame of the little hut.— We had now nothing left to sleep on save one old blanket for each man which we had with us on the mountain, and had lost nearly all our traps. Under these highly aggravating circumstances some of the men became desperate, declared they would retake their property or die in the attempt. For my part, I viewed the matter calmly and seriously and determined to abide the dictates of prudence only. Seeing from the trail of the Indians that they were not very numerous, and had a number of horses with them, we determined, after some controversy, to rob them of their horses, or other property commensurate to our loss. Accordingly we made preparations for our perilous adventure — we eat supper, prepared our fire arms, and a little after dark set out on search of the enemy — the night was calm and clear. We traversed the valley up and down for several hours without making any discoveries; we then ascended an adjacent hill, from the summit of which we discovered at a considerable distance a number of dim fires. A controversy here arose amongst the men as to the expediency of attacking the Indians. It was finally decided, however, by a majority of the company; that we should attack them at all hazards. We started in the direction of the fires, and after travelling some distance, and having lost sight of the fires, some of the men again became discouraged, and

strongly urged the propriety of abandoning the project; but on calling a vote a majority again decided in favor of attacking the Indians and in a few minutes after we arrived on the top of a hill, within 50 or 60 yards of the enemy's camp. Here we halted for the purpose of reconnoitering. At this time the moon was just rising above the summit of the mountain, and casting its glimmering rays o'er the valley beneath, but did not shine on the Indian camp. — There were five fires, and the Indians appearing more numerous than we had expected to find them, we thought it advisable to be as careful and judicious about attacking them as possible. At the foot of this hill, near a large rock, we left our hats, coats and every thing that was unnecessary in action — we also designated this as a point of meeting, in case we should get separated in the skirmish; and had an understanding that but two should fire at a time, and that Capt. Stephens was to command. Mr. Hockday and I were selected to shoot first. We then started & crawled silently along on our hands and knees until we got within eight or ten steps of one of the fires, where we laid down in the brush, with our heads close together to consult as to the most proper mode of surprising the savages, whose dusky forms were then extended in sleep around the dying embers. While in this position, some eager for the conflict, others trembling with fear, a large dog rose from one of the fires and commenced growling and barking in the most terrifying manner. The spell of silence was now broken, and an immediate and final skirmish with our enemy rendered unavoidable. Thinking ourselves rather too much exposed to the fire of the Indians we retreated fifteen or twenty steps down the bank. Some of the Indians then came to the top of the bank and commenced shooting arrows at us, and yelling at the extent of their

lungs. At this moment Mr. Stephens was heard to say in a firm tone "now is the time my boys, we must fight or die;" upon this Mr. Hockday and I fired; one of the Indians on the bank was seen to fall, and the remainder ran back to the camp. On hearing the report of our rifles the Indians, to the number of two or three hundred, rose out of the bushes and literally covered the plain, while their terrific war whoop — mingled with an occasional crack of a rifle, rendered the aspect of things more threatening than the most timid had before anticipated. We ran to our appointed place to meet, but before we had time to gather our baggage, we found ourselves completely surrounded and hemmed in on every side by the savages. Finding that we could not escape by flight, but must fight, we ran to the top of the hill, and having sheltered ourselves as well as we could amongst the rocks, commenced yelling and firing in turn, (yelling is a very essential point in Indian warfare.) This scene was kept up for near an hour without any damage to our company, and as we supposed, but little injury to the Indians.* The savages seeing we were determined to defend ourselves to the last gave way on the opposite side of the hill from their camp, and we made our escape out of their circle, and were glad to get away with our lives, without any of our property or that of the Indians. The scenes of this night will ever be indelibly impressed upon my memory.†

After travelling five or six miles we came to a deep ravine or hollow — we carefully descended the precipice to the flat below, where we encamped for the night; but from fright, fatigue, cold and hunger, I could not sleep,

*We are unable to say what tribe these Indians belonged to— they were probably the Aricaras, or possibly the Arapahoes or Utes.

†This engagement no doubt occurred near where the Laramie River crosses the Colorado-Wyoming line, not far from the town of Laramie, Wyoming.

and lay contemplating on the striking contrast between a night in the villages of Pennsylvania and one on the Rocky Mountains. In the latter, the plough-boy's whistle, the gambols of the children on the green, the lowing of the herds, and the deep tones of the evening bell, are unheard; not a sound strikes upon the ear, except perchance the distant howling of some wild beast, or war-whoop of the uncultivated savage—all was silent on this occasion save the muttering of a small brook as it wound its way through the deep cavities of the gulph down the mountain, and the gentle whispering of the breeze, as it crept through the dark pine or cedar forest, and sighed in melancholy accents; nor is it the retiring of the "god of day" to his couch in the western horizon that brings on this desolate scene — his rising in the east does not change the gloomy aspect — night and day are nearly the same in this respect.

About midnight we were alarmed by a shrill whistle on the rocks above, & supposing it to be the Indians in pursuit of us we seized our guns and ran a few rods from our fires. After waiting for some time, without hearing any more noise, one of the men ascended the precipice, and discovered that the object of our fears was a large drove of Elk. In the morning we continued to travel down this ravine, — and I was struck with the rough and picturesque appearance of the adjacent hills. On our right and left, arose like two perpendicular ramparts, to the heighth of near two hundred feet, two chains of mountains. Not a blade of grass, bush or plant was to be seen on these hard slopes, — huge rocks detached from the main body, supported by the recumbent weight of other unseen rocks appeared in the act of falling, and presented a frightful appearance — nothing met the eye but an inexhaustible avalanch of rocks — sombre, gray or black rocks. If

Dante had designed to picture in one of his circles the Hell of Stones, he might have taken this scene for his moddle. — This is one scenery in the vicinity of the Rocky Mountains; and perhaps an hour's travel would present another of a very different character — one that the artist who designed to depict the beautiful and enchanting landscape would select for a moddle.

After travelling some fifteen or twenty miles, we came to the trail where the main body of the Indians with whom we had the skirmish the evening before, had passed along. It was near half a mile wide, and the snow was literally trodden into the earth. I have since understood from whites who have been in the habit of trading with this nation, prior to their declaration of hostilities against the whites, that they numbered from seven to eight hundred warriors. Alarmed at this formidable appearance of the hostile Indians, we mutually declined the idea of going to Santa Fee, and turned and travelled in the direction of the main body of our company.

We continued to travel day after day, with all possible speed — occasionally killing a buffaloe, a goat, or a bighorn, as we passed over the plains and prairies which were literally covered with these animals; and on the morning of the 9th of April, we arrived safe at our old camp, & were gratified to find our thirteen men and two mules in the enjoyment of good health, with plenty to eat and drink. After exchanging civilities all around, by a hearty shake of the hand, and taking some refreshment, which was immediately prepared for us, I related to the company the dismal tidings of the near approach of the hostile Indians, and the circumstances of being robbed by them, and being defeated in the attempt to retake our property.—All were now satisfied of the imprudence of attempting to go to Santa Fee by

this route, as well as of the necessity of devising some other method of saving our merchandise. We finally concluded to conceal our merchandise, baggage, fur, and every thing that we could not pack on our backs or on the two mules, and return to our appointed winter quarters, at the mouth of the Laramies River, with the expectation of meeting Capt. Gant, and obtaining some assistance from him. On the morning of the 20th of April, having made every necessary preparation, we set out on our journey for the mouth of the Laramies river. After two days travel, we came to the foot of the mountain which we had endeavored in vain to cross in November. The snow was still deep on the top of it; but by aid of the buffaloe trails, we were enabled to scale it without much difficulty, except that our mules suffered with hunger, having had nothing to eat but pine brush. At the foot of the mountain we found abundance of sweet cottonwood, and our mules being very fond of it, we detained two or three days to let them recruit from their suffering in crossing the mountains. This mountain and the one we left our fur on, are covered with the most splendid timber of different kinds such as fir, cedar, white pine, &c. On the margin of the rivers and creeks in the plains, the only timber is cottonwood, under growth, willow and rose bushes; out in the middle of the plains there is none of any description. In the month of June, a person by taking a view of the country east of this mountain with a spy glass, could see nothing but a level plain extending from the foot of the mountain as far as the eye can penetrate, covered with green grass, and beautiful flowers of various descriptions; and by turning to the northwest, the eye meets nothing but a rough and dismal looking mountain, covered with snow, and presenting all the appearance of dreary winter. These plains extend to the state of

Missouri, with scarce a hill or a grove of timber to interrupt the sight, and literally covered with game of almost every kind.

On the 25th we again resumed our journey down the river, and continued ahead without any difficulty — passing over nearly the same ground that we had travelled over going up the fall before; killing plenty of game — buffaloe, deer, bear, bighorn, antelope, &c., and on the 20th May we landed at the mouth of the Laramies; but to our utter astonishment and discomfiture we discovered that not one of the parties had returned according to agreement.

[*Here is the end of what was published before. The manuscript continues as follows:*]*

After remaining here until the 29th, our commander, Mr. Stephens, and another man took the two mules, which by this time had greatly recovered from their famished state, and started in search of the other parties. In vain they travelled up and down the La Platte and its tributaries, but no traces of the lost companions could be discovered, and on the 6th of June they returned, much fatigued and disheartened. During their travels they had discovered, on some of the creeks, 60 or 70 miles from our encampment, many signs of beaver — encountered several Grizzly bears, and several times narrowly escaped the Indians;† Mr. Stephens having had several balls shot through his clothes. In this situation we remained for five or six days, when Mr. Stephens proposed that each man should go on foot, with a trap or two on his back, his blankets, together with what we could pack upon the two mules, and

*This is a note of the publisher and no doubt refers to this portion of the manuscript having been published some time previous, in the *Clearfield Republican*.

†These were no doubt the rascally Aricaras with whom they had so much trouble the following winter when they returned to this locality.

commence trapping on these creeks. This proposition was objected to by some of the company who were in favor of securing some of Capt. Gant's merchandise, find the Indians and purchase horses of them. So many different propositions were here made, that nothing definite could be agreed upon.— Mr. Smith, Mr. Fully and myself agreed to repair to the trapping ground and commence operations, with the understanding that Capt. S., should receive a certain share of the profits, as a recompense for the discovery he had made. Accordingly having every thing arranged, on the 11th we started, leaving the remainder of the company to pursue their own course.

Mr. Stephens having a part of the men indebted to him for clothing, &c., and knowing that if they remained at camp he would not be able to collect it, told them that if they would go and bring the beaver fur off the mountain, where we had left it in January last, he would ensure them an equal share of the proceeds of our trapping expedition — and they, with this understanding set out. This contract was made without any consultation having been had with us; and the men, not aware of any thing but fairness on the part of Stephens in making this bargain, marched for the fur, and succeeded in getting it off the mountain into the plain, without much difficulty, packed it on their mules, together with what we had left in our winter cabins, and brought the whole to the mouth of the Laramies river. In the meantime, Smith, Fully, and myself were busily engaged in trapping on the tributary streams of the river Platte. We encountered much difficulty and danger in this excursion, from wild beasts and hostile Indians.— One circumstance with a bear I must relate: — On a pleasant summer evening, when nothing seemed disposed to disturb the tranquility of our forest

home, we built a fire under the cliff of a large rock, on the bank of a small creek, to roast some buffaloe meat. After having cooked and eat our evening repast, I was standing close to the rock, apart from the other men ten or twelve feet, — all at once one of them jumped up and ran off, exclaiming "the bear," "the bear!" I instantly cast my eyes to the top of the precipice, where they encountered this hideous monster seated on the rock with his mouth wide open, and his eyes sparkling like fire. My whole frame shook with agitation. I knew that to attempt to run would be certain death. My gun was standing against a tree within my reach, and after calling for the aid of my companions, I raised my rifle to my face and taking deliberate aim at the most fatal spot, fired —which brought sir Bruin to the ground. — In the meantime Smith and Fully came to my assistance, and also discharged the contents of their rifles into his head.

In a few days afterwards we were joined by the rest of the company, who, having secreted the fur, &c., at the mouth of the Laramies river, had come on search of us. We now, for the first time, got a knowledge of the conduct of Stephens relative to our fur. The men informed us of the contract between them and Stephens. We answered that we could agree to no such contract — that the fur belonged to us, and that we intended to keep it. They then devised other means to secure their share of 150 beaver skins, (the whole number we had caught.) Stephens then told the men that he would not be accountable for any of the fur, and the only way to obtain any of it, was to take it by force. Seeing the folly of further resistance — 18 against 3 — we were obliged to surrender our earnings, which they took and divided equally among themselves.

The next day we left this company at whose hands we had received such ill-treatment, and returned to the

mouth of the Laramies, with the expectation of meeting Capt. Gant — but we were sadly mistaken — on our arrival there no traces of Capt. G's company could be discovered. Next day Mr. Stephens & his party also returned. After remaining here 3 days together, hunting fishing, and indulging in other amusements, Mr. Fitzpatrick* and a company of 115 men, came to our camp. He was on his way to join his company on the west side of the mountains, on the Columbia river, and to supply them with merchandize, ammunition, horses, &c. This company informed us that the firm of Gant & Blackwell had become insolvent. At this news we all became discouraged; and finally Mr. Stephens and the whole company agreed to join in with Fitzpatrick and go with him to his rendezvous, where we were to make arrangements as to hiring, purchasing equipments, &c. Mr. Stephens took 120 beaver skins, which belonged to Captain Gant, and sold them to Fitzpatrick, which he secreted in the ground, with the intention of raising them when on his return to Missouri — in consideration of which, he was to furnish him with horses and such other equipments as he might want.†

*Fitzpatrick was at the mouth of the Laramie about this time, not on his return from St. Louis. The circumstances will be given elsewhere.

†The conduct of Stephens, in taking the beaver skins belonging to Captain Gant, and the manner in which he treated Leonard and his companions was certainly not justified by the code then in vogue in the mountains; it was simply a dishonorable piece of business, to say the least, and, being beyond the pale of the law, the victims had no redress—might here was right. These beaver pelts unfortunately were the indirect cause of Stephens's death. It seems that when they reached Pierre's Hole, Fitzpatrick ignored the agreement he had made with Stephens, and the latter with a few companions started for the mouth of the Laramie to recover the furs. They had been out only a few days when they were set upon by the same band of Indians with whom the fight occurred at Pierre's Hole and a number of the party were killed, and Stephens received a very severe wound in the thigh from which he died a few days later. "At Stephens's request," says Chittenden, "a few minutes before his death, Sublette took back to St. Louis 86 pounds of beaver and 7 pounds castorum belonging to Stephens. The receipt of this property is still in existence in the possession of M. L. Gray of St. Louis."

Fitzpatrick was dishonest and dishonorable, and no code whatsoever would justify him in doing what he did—first, in his treat-

July 1st. Having made this arrangement with Mr. F., our camp was all confusion at an early hour this morning, preparing to depart for the Columbia river.* Mr. F., took one of the fleetest and most hardy horses in his train, and set out in advance of the main body, in order to discover the disposition of the various Indian tribes through whose dominions we were to travel, and to meet us at a designated point on the head of the Columbia river.† After

ment of Stephens, with regard to which Leonard says: "We all knew that it was a dishonest transaction from beginning to end." Fitzpatrick having everything in his own possession, was therefore contented and as independent as any mean man who had it in his power to make his own terms. He did not live up to the agreement made with Nathaniel J. Wyeth. According to the contract, the latter went to Boston, purchased an outfit of goods, and returned with them to Green River; but Fitzpatrick refused to take them, and Wyeth had them on his hands. Wyeth made the statement that "he would yet roll a stone in their [the Rocky Mountain Fur Company] yard, which they would never be able to remove." This he did by establishing Fort Hall, which he sold to the Hudson Bay Company: thus the stone was there and they were never able to remove it. His treatment of Peter Skene Ogden, a Hudson Bay Company trader, in which he used liquor to get his trappers drunk and then got their furs for practically nothing, is equally dishonorable. There is a striking contrast between this and the treatment accorded to Jedediah S. Smith of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company by the Hudson Bay Company some few years previous. When Smith met with his misfortune on the Umpqua River, Dr. McLaughlin recovered his furs from the Indians and returned them to Smith, who then sold them to the Hudson Bay Company at London prices, and returned to his partners in the Rocky Mountains with a draft for over $10,000. This was really one of the most honorable deeds that ever occurred in the mountains, and stands out the more prominently, because being so at variance with the mountain code. It is certain that a large majority of these furs would eventually have reached the Hudson Bay Company's posts.

*Leonard throughout this narrative, when speaking of the Columbia River, does not mean the present stream of this name, but the Snake River as well, thus the Columbia River as he knew it extended from the headwaters of the present Snake River, to the Pacific Ocean.

†The statements made here are somewhat at variance with other authorities. It will be remembered that the year previous, while Captain Gant was at the mouth of the Laramie River, preparing for his fall hunt, Fitzpatrick came to his camp with a few companions, and on September 3, 1831, they continued their journey to St. Louis, accompanied by Captain Blackwell and two other men from Gant's company. From the fact that Blackwell joined Fitzpatrick with a view of traveling more safely, it would seem that they were bound for St. Louis, and from the statement here made we are led to believe that he went to the latter place, and was now returning with his supplies and one hundred and fifteen men, to the rendezvous in the mountains which was this year at Pierre's Hole. It will be observed that according to this statement he was absent from the mountains from September 1, 1831, to July 15, or thereabout, 1832. Leonard states that they joined Fitzpatrick and left the mouth of the Laramie, July 1, while others say that both parties left this point June 13, also that they reached the rendezvous of the Rocky Mountain

packing up all our moveable property, we started in the course which he had taken, with a force of near 150 strong, many of whom were afraid of nothing, & anxious to meet any danger. We this day, travelled about twenty miles and encamped for the night. The weather was serene and warm, and the men all in high spirits, as we had plenty of fresh meat.

July 2d. Early in the morning we resumed our journey — stopped in the heat of the day to rest our horses — country quite beautiful — soil rather poor, abounding with sand plains. Travelled about 15 or 20 miles and encamped for the night.

July 3d. This day we made but little progress in travelling in consequence of a heavy fall of rain — came in

Fur Company, of which Mr. Fitzpatrick was one of the principal partners, at Pierre's Hole, August 2, 1832. But we know from unquestionable authorities that this rendezvous took place at the beginning of July (William L. Sublette arrived July 8) and it began breaking up about the 17th. He also states that the battle of Pierre's Hole, in which he participated, took place August 26; as a matter of fact, it took place July 18. A. K. Stephens, captain of Leonard's company on the Laramie, who with all his men joined the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, was wounded in a fight with the Indians July 26, and, after lingering a few days, died. This, therefore, proves conclusively that they reached Pierre's Hole before August 2 as stated by Leonard. The chronological order of events as given in the narrative, is certainly correct with possibly the exception of Fitzpatrick's movements, but Leonard is certainly mistaken in many of his dates. The events appear to have occurred from two weeks to a month earlier than the date given by him.

In the fall of 1831, according to Chittenden, Fraeb and Fitzpatrick, representing the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, attempted to make their hunt in the Powder River country, but directly at their heels followed Vanderburgh and Drips, representing the American Fur Company (Astor's company). The former became very indignant at this action and quietly stole out of the country, and by forced marches traveled west for upwards of four hundred miles to the forks of Snake River, having fixed their next rendezvous in the valley of Pierre's Hole. They spent the winter trading with the Flathead and Nez Percé Indians, unannoyed by their competitors.

"Early in the year 1832, the most eventful year in the Rocky Mountain fur-trade, Fitzpatrick and his partners set out upon their spring hunt [according to Leonard he must have been in St. Louis]. Their course lay up the valley of the Snake to the mouth of Salt River and up the latter stream for a distance, when they crossed over into the valley of John Gray (now called John Day) River. Ascending this stream to its source, the party passed over a range of mountains into the valley of Bear River. Here, to their disgust, they found Vanderburgh and Drips, who were evidently trying to find them. It was resolved to strike off into some other section at once. [Milton] Sublette unluckily was severely wounded in an affray with an Indian, and was compelled to stay behind. Joseph Meek remained to take care of

contact with a large drove of buffaloe, out of which our hunters succeeded in killing ten — one of the men received a bite from a snake, but as it was not of a very poisonous species, the wound soon healed, and the victim was more scared than hurt — but little variation in the scenery of the country.

July 5, 6 & 7. The weather was fair — travelled at the rate of 25 miles per day — nothing of interest occurred. The country through which we passed is rather rough, abounding with game of every description, and is remarkable for the plentitude of wild goats. I have seen the plains literally covered with them. Occasionally the men would fall to and kill them by hundreds. We also fell in

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him, and it was not until several months afterward that he was able to rejoin his companions, who, after their spring hunt, had assembled at the annual rendezvous in the valley of Pierre's Hole.

"Here to their infinite vexation, Vanderburgh and Drips turned up again, and as it would soon be time for the various bands of trappers and Indians to assemble, it was of the utmost importance to receive the annual convoy of goods from St. Louis before their rivals should capture the trade. William L. Sublette had contracted to bring out the outfit, and in order to hurry him up it was decided that Fitzpatrick should go to meet him. He set out at once and met Sublette on the Platte River below the mouth of the Laramie, a distance of some four hundred miles from Pierre's Hole. On their way back, June 13, Fitzpatrick hired a party of men at Laramie River belonging to the firm of Gant and Blackwell, who had experienced a most unfortunate campaign at trapping during the previous winter. [This statement it will be observed is entirely different from that of Leonard's.]

"When the joint party arrived at the Sweetwater, Fitzpatrick went on ahead entirely alone to carry the news of Sublette's approach to rendezvous. It was a hazardous enterprise in that dangerous country. Fitzpatrick led a very fleet horse already saddled and equipped, while he rode another, so that the first might be at all times fresh for a chase if necessary. Everything went well until he reached the valley of Green River, where he came suddenly upon a party of Blackfeet Indians. Mounting the led horse he galloped to the mountains and concealed himself in a defile. After waiting three days he came out from his retreat only to fall in with the Indians again. This time he lost his other horse in making his escape together with all the equipments which were attached to his saddle. Even his blankets were lost, and he saved only his rifle and a single charge which it contained. He barely succeeded in saving himself by crawling among the rocks and cliffs of the mountains. Here he remained for several days, when he finally emerged and made his way on foot in utter destitution toward the rendezvous. His sole resource for food must have been berries and roots. His moccasins wore out and he made others with his hat. In swimming one of the rivers, probably the Snake, he lost his rifle. At length, when nearly used up, he was met by two Iroquois hunters, who helped him to rendezvous on one of their horses. He arrived so emaciated as scarcely to

with a party of Indians, but on their seeing our forces, fled, without attempting to injure us. We were unable to ascertain the name of the tribe to which they belonged.

July 8th. Early in the morning we resumed our journey, but had not proceeded far until we found ourselves in the midst of a bed of quicksand. So deep was the sand in some places that several of our horses were completely swamped in it, & it was with great difficulty that we succeeded in getting round this swamp, as it were, to continue our journey. Having surmounted this difficulty, one of our men, a Mr. White, who wandered from the company, came well nigh falling a victim to the fury of a grizzly bear — having in the encounter, had one of his arms literally torn from his body, and had it not been for the timely assistance rendered by some of his companions, who afterwards killed the bear, his death would have been the inevitable consequence. This night we selected

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be recognized. [See Leonard's account.] Sublette was already there, and the partners were thoroughly alarmed over his absence.

"The caravan of William L. Sublette reached the rendezvous on the 8th of July. There were already present the various parties of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company numbering between one and two hundred men. The American Fur Company was represented by a large party under Vanderburgh and Drips. Nathaniel J. Wyeth with his raw New Englanders was there, while the neighboring plains were covered with the tents of free trappers and bands of Indians. The trading proceeded briskly and much to the advantage of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, for Fontenelle had not yet arrived with the annual supplies for Vanderburgh and Drips, and they were therefore not well prepared to compete with their rivals.

"On the 17th of July the rendezvous began to break up. Milton Sublette was to lead a party into the country north of the Salt Lake desert. As his route would lie for a long distance in the valley of Snake River, Wyeth decided to accompany him for protection as far as their ways ran together. A free trapper by the name of Sinclair with fifteen men also started with them. The first day they proceeded about eight miles up the valley, intending to bear off to the south on the following morning. Just as they were about to resume their march, July 18, they saw Indians approaching, who proved to be a band of the dreaded Grosventres [Blackfeet]. A parley ensued during which Antoine Godin killed a chief who had come forward, and thus precipitated the Battle of Pierre's Hole, which raged the remainder of the day. It was a hard fought struggle, and the most noted battle between the Indians and the traders that ever took place in the mountains [of which this narrative gives a very good account]. Among the casualties on the part of the whites was the partisan Sinclair killed, and William Sublette wounded. The Blackfeet withdrew during the night."

a high piece of ground for our encampment, where the wind continued to assail us most violently during the whole night. The next day we travelled about twenty miles, without meeting with any thing of consequence.

July 10th. Finding that we were making but little headway in our travelling, we resolved to increase our speed, & accordingly the whole company was on the move at an early hour this morning. We found our route beginning to grow still more obstructed by rocky cliffs, which are dispersed over this section of the mountain region for many miles, and present an appearance to the beholder similar to a meadow covered with hay-cocks. As the country continued to grow rough, game became scarce, and we began to kill such meat as we *could*, and not such as we *chose*; indeed we thought ourselves very fortunate when one of our hunters would succeed in killing a goat or an antelope — species of meat which we would not look at, when in the vicinity of deer and buffaloe. This part of the mountain is covered with beautiful timber of the best quality, such as fir, pine, cedar, &c. We only travelled about ten miles this day. On the following morning we resumed our journey, and continued to travel day after day, when, after a long and toilsome voyage, we arrived at the point on the Columbia river, designated to meet Mr. Fitzpatrick. Judge of our surprise, when on arriving here no traces of him could be discovered. In vain we searched for some clue to this, to us, melancholy circumstance. What can detain him? was the question asked by each of us. Disappointment is heart-sickening under any circumstance, but to be disappointed under such circumstances, and in such a place, was perplexing in the extreme. — One scouting party after another were despatched to gather some tidings of the lost Fitzpatrick, but all to no purpose.

Had he been destroyed by the savages? The former brilliant success of the man's intercourse with the Indians would not warrant such a belief, as he had many times previously passed over these mountains with no other companion than his trusty steed. The most natural conclusion at which to arrive, was, that the dull and cloudy weather had caused him to loose his course, and that he had become bewildered, and was yet wandering through the wilderness.

After a fruitless search of several days, we concluded to descend the river and search for the company which Mr. Fitzpatrick had left there the summer before,—where we had a faint hope that we might find Mr. F., in safety. The first day we travelled about 20 miles and encamped for the night on the bank of the river. Although we knew that we were in the vicinity of the savage Blackfeet Indians, yet but few traces of them had been discovered through the day, and we therefore retired to rest in our encampment without taking the necessary precautions for defence, in case of an attack. But it was not long before we were enabled to appreciate the consequence of our negligence, or fancied security. About midnight we were awoke from our slumbers by a furious attack by a large party of Blackfeet. They fired into our tents before we were aware of their approach. Immediately each man was on his feet, and on the look out. After a small skirmish of random shooting, which lasted an hour or so, the Indians, finding the strength of our forces, thought it best to retire from the field, with the loss of three killed, and as we supposed, 8 or 10 wounded. The loss on our side was one man wounded in the leg, 5 horses killed, 3 wounded, and 14 stolen. The Blackfeet are a powerful nation, and are better supplied with implements of war, than almost any

other tribe of this region.* They have always retained a most inveterate hostility to the Flatheads, against whom they wage a continual warfare, having at one time greatly reduced their strength, and on several occasions came well nigh exterminating the entire tribe. Of late years the Flatheads have been better prepared for war, and have bravely held their own. This undying hostility appears to be owing to the Blackfeet refusing to let the Flatheads hunt buffaloe on the east side of the mountain.

The following morning we took up our march and continued down the river. As we travelled along we seen many fresh signs of Indians, and apprehended much danger from them, which caused us to labour under the most intense fear, lest we should fall into an ambush of this crafty tribe. We killed several fat deer, goats, and an antelope, and encamped on a high hill, from which we had a beautiful view of the surrounding country; where we could see the different kinds of game traversing the plains at leisure, contented, and undisturbed, save when aroused from their lair by the sudden onset of the Indian hunter. This night we very prudently stationed a strong guard round our encampment, and were permitted to pass the night in peace, which was quite warm and pleasant. In the morning we resumed our journey, and about the middle of the day found ourselves in the vicinity of another tribe of Indians. We sent a flag to their camp, which was received in the most friendly manner. This proved to be the Flathead tribe. These Indians are more pacific and pleasing in their manners than any tribe we had yet en-

*This party with whom Leonard and his companions were traveling was under the charge of William L. Sublette, who was to bring the supplies to the mountains for the use of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. The Indians who attacked them here were the Blackfeet and the same band, or a part of them at least were at the battle of Pierre's Hole, and came near being exterminated. The route taken by this party was the one usually followed by these parties along the Sweetwater, and through the South Pass.

countered, and reside mostly on the river of that name. I will here quote the description of this tribe as given by Mr. Cox,* a gentleman well acquainted with the Indian character, which fully embraces my own views:—"The Flatheads have fewer failings than any tribe I ever met with. They are honest in their dealings — brave in the field — quiet and amiable to their chiefs — fond of cleanliness, and are decided enemies to falsehood of every description. — The women are excellent wives and mothers, and their character for fidelity is so well established that we never heard of one single instance of one proving unfaithful to her husband. They are remarkably well made— rather tall — slender, and never corpulent." The Flatheads are well accustomed to the manners and customs of the white race, and in many respects appear ambitious to follow their example.—Some years ago, they were in the habit of using a process to flatten the heads of their children, which they deemed a very essential addition to their appearance; but since they have had intercourse with the whites they have abandoned this abominable pra[c]tice. The process of flattening the head is this: — Soon after the birth of the infant, it is placed in a kind of trough and a piece of bark fastened by means of strings through the trough, and pressed hard upon the forepart of the head, which causes it to grow flat. In this painful position they are kept a year, and in some instances over a year. They are very hospitable to strangers, and are tried friends of the white people. On coming to their village a white person always receives the best to eat, drink and smoke, and are always ready to pilot the traveller through their country. In the summer season this tribe live in the buffaloe country

*Ross Cox, one of the Astorians. He continued in the service of the Northwest Fur Company some five or six years, and was known as the "Little Irishman." He made many trips up and down the Columbia River, and later wrote an account of his adventures.

on the head of the Columbia river, where they never fail to come in contact with their cold hearted enemies, the Blackfeet, who are the most ferocious and unsparing enemy of the white men, because the Flatheads have been supplied by the whites with munitions of war. In the fall the Flatheads again return to the plains, and in the winter subsist on Salmon, roots and small game. They are always well supplied with horses, and when provision becomes scarce in one section, they pack all they have upon the backs of their horses, and remove to another. Their houses are made of slim pine poles from 20 to 30 feet long, 12 or 15 feet apart at the bottom, and joined together at the top, forming a structure in the shape of the roof of a common dwelling house. These are covered with dressed buffaloe skins sewed together. A fire is built in the middle of the cabin, and its shape forms a kind of flue or draft for the smoke — rendering this simple structure quite a comfortable habitation at the most inclement season of the year. No storm can effect them, nor no cold can reach their inmates. When moving camp these poles are taken down & one end fastened to the sides of the mule or horse and the other end dragging on the ground forming a sort of dray. The infants are put into a sack or bag, made of leather, which closes on one side by strings; this is fastened to a board near three feet long & one wide, where they are kept constantly, with the exception of an occasional dressing, &c., until a year old. To the back of this board they have a cord attached, by which they hang the sack to the saddle, whilst travelling.

After remaining here two days to observe their manners, customs, and mode of living, and getting all the information we desired, we resumed our journey, taking one of the Indians to pilot us to the station of Mr. Fitzpatrick's

company. — After several days tedious and toilsome travelling, and no extraordinary occurrence, we joined the company on the 2nd of August. It was with feelings of peculiar delight that we here beheld the visages of white men, who were no less pleased to give us a welcome reception. But a melancholy gloom was visible in every countenance, when we discovered that Fitzpatrick had not arrived. Great excitement prevailed, and vigorous measures were immediately taken to rescue him, if he had not before this, as many supposed, fallen a victim to the enraged fury of the merciless savage, or the ravenous appetite of some ferocious beast of prey. Small companies were despatched in various directions on the tributary streams of the Columbia. Diligent search was kept up for some time without success, and our search was about to be abandoned as fruitless; and indeed some of the parties had give up in despair, and returned to camp, when, a party, who had wandered into the vicinity of the Blackfeet Indians, were reconnoitering their movements in a valley from a high bluff, saw, and immediately recognized, Fitzpatrick's horse, with which the Indians were running races. — Was this calculated to inspire hope? or was it not rather an omen that our employer was destroyed by these Indians. Vigilant search was made to make further discoveries; and, to the great joy of every man, he was at length found on the banks of the Pieres river, which forms a junction with the Columbia, near the rendezvous of Fitzpatrick's company. When found he was completely exhausted, and so much wasted in flesh, and deformed in dress, that, under other circumstances, he would not have been recognized. The poor man was reduced to a skeleton, and was almost senseless. When his deliverers spoke of taking him to camp, he scarcely seemed to comprehend

their meaning. After eating some dried buffaloe meat, and a little maize, he grew better, and placing him on a horse, he was safely conveyed to camp. A general rejoicing ensued, for his appearance among us again, was like that of one risen from the dead. Although I was not much attached to the man, for I could not banish from my mind the craftiness evinced by him when we first met with him on the east side of the mountains, yet I can scarcely describe my feelings of joy on beholding him safely returned. After resting a few days, and being nourished by the provender our camp would afford, he became able to relate the misfortunes which befel him in crossing the mountain, which I will give in his own words, as follows:

ADVENTURES OF FITZPATRICK.*

"For three or four days after I left the company I travelled without any difficulty, and at great speed, but the fourth and fifth, the weather being dull and cloudy, I got strayed from my course, and soon found myself in the midst of a rough hilly country, abounding with large loose rocks which some places almost prevented me from passing at all, and covered with various kinds of timber of the most magnif[i]cent description. In passing the nights in these solitudes my rest was constantly disturbed by the dismal howl of the wolf and the fierce growl of the bear — which animals were very numerous and would frequently approach within a few steps and threaten to devour me. One day after a toilsome ride, I dismounted, turned my horse loose to graze and seated myself on a rock, with the little remaining provision I had, to refresh myself.

*Leonard's account of the adventure of Fitzpatrick here given, is probably the most full and complete of any published, although many authorities mention the same and give a more or less complete account of this particular adventure.

While thus seated resting my wearied limbs, and satisfying the gnawings of hunger, I was suddenly startled by a scrambling on the rocks immediately in my rear. I turned round and beheld a huge bear approaching me in double quick time. I instantly sprang to my feet, for I was well acquainted with his mode of warfare. I turned and faced his lordship, when he approached within about six feet of me, rose on his hind feet and most impudently stared me right in the face, for more than a minute. After discovering that I was no ways bashful, he bowed, turned and run—I did the same, and made for my horse. Bruin was not so easy fooled; he seen my retreat & gave chase. I thought I could reach my horse and mount before the bear could reach me, but the approach of the bear frightened my beast, and just as I was going to mount he sprang loose and threw me on the broad of my back. The bear was at my heels, and I thought that all chance of escape was now gone. Instantly I was again on my feet, — and, as it were, in a fit of desperation, rushed towards the bear, which, fearing, as they do, the *face* of man, again turned and run. — Sir Bruin stopped to secure the little morsel I had been eating, and retired a few paces to devour it. While the bear was thus employed, I crept to my gun, keeping the rock between him and me, having reached it, took deliberate aim and killed him dead on the spot. Having secured my horse, I fell to work at the carcase of my vanquished foe, and, after cooking and eating a choice piece of his flesh, left the rest to feed his kindred. It being now near night, I travelled two or three miles further, and encamped for the night. The next morning appeared more favourable over head, and I made an early start. Being on the banks of a small creek, I concluded to follow it a while. After winding my way through the rocks and

trees, till near the middle of the day, I came to a valley which seemed to be hemmed in on every side by huge towering hills. I had not travelled far in this valley before I found myself ushered into the presence of a hostile tribe of Indians. I halted to devise some means to effect a return without being discovered; but I soon found that it was too late. Immediately in my rear was a choice set of young warriors—in front, and on both sides by high and craggy mountains. My noble steed, than him, I would defy the whole Indian world to produce a stouter, swifter, or better, was now brought to the test. He started with the velocity of the rein deer,— boun[d]ing over ditches, stones logs and brush.—Soon I began to ascend the mountain, but found it much too steep and rough. The Indians dismounted and followed on foot. I applied the whip, but in vain. My horse was compelled to yield to exhausted nature — and I dismounted, and left my much prized animal to fall a prey to the savages. I ran up the mountain with all possible speed, but finding that I must eventually be overtaken, I secreted myself in a hole among the rocks, and closed the mouth of it with leaves and sticks. After remaining a few minutes in this subterraneous cavern, I heard the ferocious yells of triumph of my pursuers, as they captured my lamented horse. The victory was not yet complete, although the horse was the principal prize. Some of them followed on and came close to my hiding place, passed and re-passed within reach without discovering me. What a moment of intense anxiety was this! All chance of escape cut off. No prospect of mercy if taken! Hope began to die — and death inevitable seemed to be the very next incident that would occur. They continued their search until near sunset, for they knew that I had not reached the summit of the mountain.

As they retired down the mountain, squads of four or five would frequently halt and hold a busy consultation — then suddenly return to complete their search, as if they feared that some hollow tree or rocky cavern might escape unexplored. Finally, they gave me up in despair, and retired into the valley, with my horse.

"Now that I had escaped this scrutinizing search, I began to breathe more free and easy; but I was yet far from being out of danger. I was conscious that I had lost the course to the Columbia river, and could not tell how to regain it, even if I should succeed in escaping from my present perilous situation. I remained secreted in the rocks till long after dark, when I crawled out, and surveyed the country as well as the darkness of the night would permit, and finally started in the direction which I thought I would have the least chance of meeting the Indians. I had not travelled far, however, until I was again doomed to be disappointed, for I was on the very borders of their encampment. Happily the camp was all quiet, and I returned quietly to my hiding place on the mountain, hoping that on the morrow I would be able to make some new discovery by which to extricate myself from these savages — which I judged to be the merciless Blackfeet. Early in the morning of the next day the hunt was resumed with increased vigilance; but again returned with disappointment. After the sound of their voices no longer reached me, I crawled to the mouth of the hole from which I presently beheld them running races with the horse they had taken from me. In this sport they spent the day. This village did not appear to be their permanent residence, but was handsomely situated on the banks of a small creek, and I suppose they had came here on a sporting expedition. The second night I made another effort

to save myself, and gradually descended the mountain, to the creek some distance below the camp. — This I followed, until daylight again compelled me to hide myself; which I did by crawling into the brush close to the creek, where I secreted myself till darkness again gave me an opportunity to resume my journey. During the day I seen a number of the Indians pass and repass up and down the valley, whom I supposed to be hunters. This day I again had a view of my horse under the saddle of the chief of the tribe, as I supposed; but did not attempt to rescue him. The following night I travelled a short distance down the creek when I came to where it empties into the Pieres river.* Here I came to my reckoning of the country, and thought that if I could escape from hunger and beasts of prey, I could manage to elude the Indians. Supposing that the Indians were not so numerous on the opposite side of the river, I resolved to cross over — for which purpose I built a raft of old logs, laid my shot-pouch, gun, blanket, &c. on it, and pushed for the opposite shore. After getting nearly across, the current became very rapid, and I began to descend the river at a rapid rate until I struck a rock which tore my frail craft to pieces — committing myself, gun, blanket and all to the watery element. Being weak from hunger and exertion, it was with great difficulty that I succeeded in reaching the land, with the loss of my only companion, and my only hope in this wilderness of dangers — my gun. I stood on the bank in

*The river here referred to is Pierre's River which flows through Pierre's Hole or valley, and is a tributary of the Snake, on which the famous battle occurred.

Many of these narrow valleys in the Rocky Mountains were called "holes" in the early fur-trading and trapping days. The name seems to have originated from the fact that the trapper in passing up and down the main stream, would pass the narrow opening or outlet of the tributary, in the bank or bluff along the main river. These narrow openings in the hills appeared so much like holes that they received this name, and where a trapper was known to frequent one particular stream the valley was usually named after him; thus we have Jackson's Hole, Gardner's Hole, Ogden's Hole, Pierre's Hole, etc.

the midst of despair. I had no other weapon than a butcher knife to fight my way through a country swarming with savages and equally dangerous wild beasts. On my knife depended all hope of preventing starvation. The loss of my blanket was also severe, as the weather was sometimes quite cold, and I had no other clothing than a shirt and vest—having thrown the rest away when pursued by the Indians on the mountain. I followed the banks of this river for two days, subsisting upon buds, roots, weeds, &c. On the second evening whilst digging for a sweet kind of root, in a swamp, I was alarmed by the growl of wolves, which were descending the hill to the river, about fifty yards distant. The only chance of escape now, was to climb a tree, which I did immediately. Here I was compelled to roost until daylight, in the most painful agitation. The wolves tearing up the ground and gnawing at the tree so that I sometimes feared they would cut it through. The third day I travelled with great speed, not even stopping for any thing to eat. On the fourth I happened where the wolves had killed a buffaloe. — Here I satisfied my appetite by collecting all the meat that was left on the bones, made a fire by rubbing two sticks together, and cooked it. From the gluttenous fill which I took of this meat, I was enabled to travel three or four days, without any particular occurrence; but I found that the further I descended the river, the scarcer became the roots, buds, &c., on which I must depend for subsistence, and I was finally obliged to turn my attention to get something to eat, without travelling any further. For several days I loitered about from place to place, but could find no nourishment. My body began to grow weaker and weaker, until I was no longer able to walk. Still my mind held its sway, and I was well aware how desperate was

my situation. Finally loosing all prospect of getting any thing more to eat, & no hope of being found by my companions or friendly Indians, I thought of preparing myself for death, and committed my soul to the Almighty. I have no recollection of any thing that occurred after this, until I found myself in the hands of my deliverers."

The story of Fitzpatrick created much excitement in our camp. Some were determined on immediately chastising the Indians, and retaking his horse. Others, who were not friendly disposed towards Mr. F., would not credit his story. For my part I thought the man had related nothing more than the truth as to his sufferings, for nothing less could have reduced him to the condition in which he was found. In a few days all was restored to order and tranquility, and we commenced making arrangements for trapping, &c.

The Columbia is a strong, clear and beautiful river at this point, (the junction of the Lewis river,) and is about 1000 yards wide. The Wallah Wallah empties into it about 14 miles lower down — which is rather muddy, and a very rapid stream. There was at this rendezvous at this time,* about 400 white people, who lived in constant intercourse with the Flatheads and "Nez Perces," or Pierced Nose tribes, which latter consists of 1000 warriors, besides women and children, and live in the closest friendship with their ne[i]ghbors, the Flatheads. They are said to act honorable in all their dealings, nor do they now

*This is a very deceptive statement. From it one would infer they were at the mouth of the Snake or Lewis River, on the Columbia, near which was the rendezvous, while as a matter of fact they were many hundreds of miles from this point. They were at Pierre's Hole, and that Leonard never intended the above idea to be conveyed is quite clear from the statement made a few lines farther on, in which he makes it perfectly plain they were in the latter place and fully describes the battle which took place there, in which he was a participant. In fact he states they were traveling down the valley of Pierre's Hole and only a few miles from the rendezvous, when they discovered the Indians with whom they had the fight.

practice treachery and stealing so extensively as most of the tribes below this; although, when first discovered by the whites, a *brave* was esteemed according to his success in stealing. They have now reformed, and a white man can at all times find a trusty friend in a Nez Perces.*

Among the discoveries of importance which we made here was nine of Captain Gant's men, who had left us at the

*It was through these Indians that the Oregon missions, both Protestant and Catholic, were established. The appeal caused intense excitement throughout the missionary circles in the east and was looked upon as a call not to be repudiated. The biographer of Marcus Whitman relates the story as follows:

"In the summer of 1832 four Nez Percé Indians made their way to St. Louis for the avowed purpose of getting some one to go and preach to their people the white man's religion, of which they had heard through the Catholic voyageurs from Canada. They were entertained by General Clark, who did all in his power to interest them, showing them whatever was worth seeing, and giving them the best of accommodations. They were feted and feasted to such an extent that it made them sick, and two of their number died during the winter. As spring approached the other two prepared to return home and decided to go by way of the American Fur Company's steamer as far as they could. Before their departure General Clark gave them a banquet and at this banquet one of the Indians made a speech which has now become celebrated in the annals of missionary work among the Western Indians. The Indian is reported to have said:

" 'I come to you over the trail of many moons from the setting sun. You were the friends of my fathers, who have all gone the long way. I came with an eye partly open for my people, who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back blind, to my blind people? I made my way to you with strong arms through many enemies and strange lands that I might carry back much to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty. Two fathers came with us, they were the braves of many winters and wars. We leave them asleep here by your great waters and wigwams. They were tired in many moons and their moccasins worn out.

" 'My people sent me to get the "White Man's Book of Heaven." You took me to where you allow your women to dance as we do not ours, and the book was not there. You took me to where they worship the Great Spirit with candles and the book was not there. You showed me images of the good spirits and the picture of the good land beyond, but the book was not among them to tell us the way. I am going back the long and sad trail to my people in the dark land. You make my feet heavy with gifts and my moccasins will grow old carrying them, yet the book is not among them. When I tell my poor blind people, after one more snow, in the big council, that I did not bring the book, no word will be spoken by our old men or by our young braves. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go a long path to other hunting-grounds. No white man will go with them, and no White Man's Book to make the way plain.' "

They left in the steamboat the following day, and when this appeal became known through the papers, it made a profound impression and stirred the churches to their very foundations. Many charged the church with tardiness in missionary work; this being a warning, money began to roll in for the purpose, missionaries were soon on their way and in this manner the Oregon missions were established.

mouth of the Laramies.* In crossing the mountain they had several encounters with the Indians, and finally lost their horses and 3 of their men. After travelling about for a number of days, under the direction of a Mr. Saunders, their leader, they came across a party belonging to this rendezvous,† whom they followed, and had arrived at camp a few days before us. No important arrangement was made among the men with regard to trapping, &c., until the people gathered in from the different parts of the mountain. In the meantime 15 of us joined together, each man furnishing an equal quantity of merchandize, horses, &c., and to receive an equal share of the proceeds.‡

August 25th. Every thing necessary for our expedition being ready this morning, we started in a southern direction, but did not go far until we encamped for the night—thinking that if we had neglected any thing which

*They were part of the men who had left the mouth of the Laramie with Gant the preceding fall to trap on the Sweetwater and neighboring streams. Leonard, it will be remembered, was with Stephens and they were to ascend the Laramie. At this rendezvous we find all of Stephens's men, and nine of Gant's men who had left the mouth of the Laramie the previous fall—which was almost half of the Gant and Blackwell company of trappers.

†The rendezvous here referred to was that at Pierre's Hole, which was the most important to the trade ever held in the mountains. The fur-trade had at this time reached its zenith, the old methods were gradually slipping away and a new order of things taking their place. The number of reputed fortunes made in the trade influenced others to engage in it, and from this time forward competition was extremely bitter, and some companies paid more for their furs in the mountains than they could realize on them in the market, which came very near ruining the business. Besides the Hudson Bay Company there were others at Pierre's Hole endeavoring to obtain a share of the trade. Among these was Nathaniel J. Wyeth; also Captain Bonneville with a large company, well equipped, and financed by New York capitalists, of whom Alfred Seton, of the old Astorians, was one. Here was also the powerful American Fur Company, losing money at every step, yet patiently dogging the Rocky Mountain Company, with a view of ruining them, that they might later have the field to themselves. Such was the condition of affairs in 1832.

‡These men are evidently the ones who started out under Sinclair, because the time, place, and number all agree. A few days later Sinclair was killed in the battle of Pierre's Hole. These free trappers and Wyeth's party, with Milton Sublette and Gervais, started on a trapping expedition to the country north of the Salt Lake desert. Mr. Saunders, one of Gant's men, took Sinclair's place, thus preserving the original number of fifteen men who went on the expedition.

we would stand in need of, we would thus discover it. The next morning finding all things in order, we continued travelling down what is called Pieres hole,* or valley. This valley is situated on the river of the same name, and is from 70 to 80 miles in length, with a high mountain on the east and west — each so high that it is impossible to pass over them, and is from eight to ten miles wide. The river runs immediately through the centre, with a beautiful grove of timber along either bank; from this timber to the mountain, a distance of four or five miles, there is nothing but a smooth plain. This meadow or prairie is so perfectly level that a person may look up or down as far as the eye will reach without meeting any thing to obstruct the sight, until the earth and sky appear to meet. After travelling a few miles this morning, some of the men, in taking a view of the country before us, discovered something like people upon horses, who appeared to be coming towards us. After continuing in the same direction for some time we came in view with the naked eye, when we halted. — They advanced towards us displaying a British flag.† This we could not comprehend; but on coming closer discovered them to be hostile Indians. We immediately despatched a messenger back to the rendezvous for reinforcements and prepared ourselves for defence. The Indians commenced building a fort in the timber on the bank of the river; but at the time we were not aware of what they were doing. After waiting here a few hours we were reinforced by 200 whites, 200 Flatheads, and 300 Nez Perces Indians. The Indians with the British flag, on seeing such a number of people galloping down the plain at full speed, immediately retreated within their fort, whither they were hotly pur-

*Pierre's Hole.

†Leonard is the only authority who mentions this use of the British flag by the Blackfeet.

sued. The friendly indians soon discovered them to belong to the Blackfeet tribe, who are decidedly the most numerous and warlike tribe in the mountains, and for this reason are not disposed to have any friendly intercourse with any other nation of an inferior number, unless they are good warriors and well armed with guns, &c. We thought we could rush right on them and drive them out of the brush into the plain and have a decisive battle at once. We advanced with all possible speed, and a full determination of success, until we discovered their fort by receiving a most destructive fire from the enclosure. This throwed our ranks into complete confusion, & we all retreated into the plain, with the loss of 5 whites, 8 Flatheads and 10 Nez Perces Indians killed, besides a large number of whites and Indians wounded. The formation of their fort astonished all hands. We had been within a few hundred yards of them all day and did not discover that they were building it. It was large enough to contain 500 warriors; and built strong enough to resist almost any attempt we might make to force it. After dressing the wounded, and having reconnoitered their fort, our forces were divided into several detachments, and sent in different directions with the intention of surrounding the fort and making them prisoners. This was done under the superintendance of Fitzpatrick, who acted as commander-in-chief.*

In a case of this kind any man not evincing the greatest degree of courage, and every symptom of bravery, is treated as a coward; and the person who advances first, furthest and fastest, and makes the greatest display of animal courage, soon rises in the estimation of his companions. Accordingly with the hope of gaining a little

*Other authorities state that William L. Sublette acted in this capacity.

glory while an opportunity offered, though not for any electioneering purpose, as a politician in the States would do — I started into the brush, in company with two acquaintances (Smith and Kean) and two Indians. We made a circuitous route and came towards the fort from a direction which we thought we would be least expected. We advanced closer and closer, crawling upon our hands and knees, with the intention of giving them *a select* shot; and when within about forty yards of their breast work, one of our Indians was shot dead. At this we all lay still for some time, but Smith's foot happening to shake the weeds as he was laying on his belly, was shot through. I advanced a little further, but finding the balls to pass too quick and close, concluded to retreat. When I turned, I found that my companions had deserted me. In passing by, Smith asked me to carry him out, which met my approbation precisely, for I was glad to get out of this unpleasant situation under any pretext — provided my reputation for courage would not be questioned. After getting him on my back, still crawling on my hands and knees, I came across Kean, lying near where the first Indian fell, who was also mortally wounded, and died soon after. I carried Smith to a place of safety and then returned to the siege. A continual fire was kept up, doing more or less execution on both sides until late in the afternoon, when we advanced to close quarters, having nothing but the thickness of their breast work between us, and having them completely surrounded on all sides to prevent any escaping. This position we maintained until sun-set, in the meantime having made preparations to set fire to the fort, which was built principally of old dry logs, as soon as night would set in, and stationed men at the point where we thought they would be most likely to make the first break, for the purpose of taking them on the wing, in their flight. Having

made all these preparations, which were to put an end to all further molestation on the part of the Blackfeet, our whole scheme and contemplated victory was frustrated by a most ingenious and well executed device of the enemy. A few minutes before the torch was to be applied, our captives commenced the most tremendous yells and shouts of triumph, and menaces of defiance, which seemed to move heaven and earth. Quick as thought a report spread through all quarters, that the plain was covered with Blackfeet Indians coming to reinforce the besieged. So complete was the consternation in our ranks, created by this stratagem, that in five minutes afterwards, there was not a single white man, Flathead or Nez Perces Indian within a hundred yards of the fort. Every man thought only of his own security, and run for life without ever looking round, which would at once have convinced him of his folly.* In a short time it was ascertained that it was only a stratagem, and our men began to collect together where our baggage was.† I never shall forget the scene here exhibited. The rage of some was unbounded, and approached to madness. For my own part, although I felt much regret at the result after so much toil and danger, yet I could not but give the savages credit for the skill they displayed in preserving their lives, at the very moment

*There had been more or less communication during the whole of the afternoon between the besieged and besiegers, through the interpreters, and when the besieged began cheering in the manner stated they informed those on the outside that they had little hope of escape and expected to die, but there was a large party of their people near by—six or eight hundred—who were in fact only a part of a larger body which would very shortly give them all the fighting they were looking for. Through some mistake, the interpreter reported that this large body of Indians were attacking the rendezvous where they had left their baggage without protection some miles away, in order to join in the attack on the besieged Indians; to this point they now rushed pell-mell, only to find it a false alarm, during which time the besieged Blackfeet made their escape.

†He here means at the rendezvous some six or eight miles distant where they had left their baggage when they rushed to the field of battle.

when desperation, as we thought, had seized the mind of each of them.

By the time we were made sensible of the full extent of our needless alarm, it had began to get dark; and on ascertaining the extent of the injury which we received, (having lost 32 killed, principally Indians,)* it was determined not to again attempt to surround the fort, which was a sore disappointment to some of the men who were keen for chastising the Indians for their trick. We then took up our march for the rendezvous; but on starting one of our party of 15 men, who had first started out the day before, could not be found. Search was made, and he was found in the brush, severely wounded. — After carrying him on a litter a few miles he died and was buried in the Indian style:—which is by digging a hole in the ground, wrapping a blanket or skin round the body, placing it in the hole, and covering it with poles and earth. This is the manner of interring the dead in this country both by the Indians and whites, except in the winter season on account of the ground being frozen, when the Indians are in the habit of wrapping their dead in buffaloe robes, and laying them on poles from one tree to another, on which poles the corpse is tied with cords. The next morning we raised another war party and went back to the battle ground, but no Indians could be found.—They must have left the fort in great haste for we found 42 head of horses, together with Fitzpatrick's which they had taken on the mountain, two warriors and one squaw lying dead inside of their fort, besides a large quantity of their baggage, such as furs, skins, &c. There must have been a great number of them, from the holes they had dug in the ground around

*Authorities differ as to the number of killed and wounded, but all practically agree that five whites were killed. The Indian allies probably lost seven and had six wounded. Leonard's number is far too high.

their dead horses and the edges of the fort, say from three to four hundred. I learned afterwards that the Nez Perces Indians shortly after found seven more dead Blackfeet, in some brush close by, where they had been secreted to save their scalps, which is the principal object with these Indians, in order to have their women dance.* In the afternoon we returned to the rendezvous and presented Mr.

*Thus in Leonard we have another, besides the many other accounts of this famous engagement. Almost every writer of this period and subject gives a description of this affair, frequently with considerable romance. And it must be said that they practically all agree as to the main points, and only differ in regard to details. The eye-witnesses of this battle who afterwards wrote accounts of it are William L. Sublette, Wyeth, A. W. Ferris, and Leonard. The best description of it is no doubt Irving's, in *Bonneville:*

On the 17th of July, a small brigade of fourteen trappers, led by Milton Sublette, brother of the captain, set out with the intention of proceeding to the southwest. They were accompanied by Sinclair and his fifteen free trappers; Wyeth, also, and his New England band of beaver hunters and salmon fishers, now dwindled down to eleven, took this opportunity to prosecute their cruise in the wilderness, accompanied with such experienced pilots. On the first day, they proceeded about eight miles to the southeast, and encamped for the night, still in the valley of Pierre's Hole. On the following morning, just as they were raising their camp, they observed a long line of people pouring down a defile of the mountains. They at first supposed them to be Fontenelle and his party, whose arrival had been daily expected. Wyeth, however, reconnoitered them with a spy-glass, and soon perceived they were Indians. They were divided into two parties, forming, in the whole, about one hundred and fifty persons, men, women and children. Some were on horseback, fantastically painted and arrayed, with scarlet blankets fluttering in the wind. The greater part, however, were on foot. They had perceived the trappers before they were themselves discovered, and came down yelling and whooping into the plain. On nearer approach, they were ascertained to be Blackfeet.

One of the trappers of Sublette's brigade, a half-breed, named Antoine Godin, now mounted his horse, and rode forth as if to hold a conference. He was the son of an Iroquois hunter, who had been cruelly murdered by the Blackfeet at a small stream below the mountains, which still bears his name. In company with Antoine rode forth a Flathead Indian, whose once powerful tribe had been completely broken down in their wars with the Blackfeet. Both of them, therefore, cherished the most vengeful hostility against these marauders of the mountains. The Blackfeet came to a halt. One of the chiefs advanced singly and unarmed, bearing the pipe of peace. This overture was certainly pacific; but Antoine and the Flathead were predisposed to hostility, and pretended to consider it a treacherous movement.

"Is your piece charged?" said Antoine, to his red companion.

"It is."

"Then cock it, and follow me."

They met the Blackfoot chief half way, who extended his hand in friendship. Antoine grasped it.

"Fire!" cried he.

The Flathead levelled his piece, and brought the Blackfoot to the ground. Antoine snatched off his scarlet blanket, which was richly ornamented, and galloped off with it as a trophy to the camp, the

Fitzpatrick with his long-lossed and highly valued horse, which seemed to compensate for all the sufferings and hardships which he had encountered.

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bullets of the enemy whistling after him. The Indians immediately threw themselves into the edge of a swamp, among willows and cotton-wood trees, interwoven with vines. Here they began to fortify themselves; the women digging a trench, and throwing up a breastwork of logs and branches, deep hid in the bosom of the wood, while the warriors skirmished at the edge to keep the trappers at bay. The latter took their station in a ravine in front, whence they kept up a scattering fire. As to Wyeth, and his little band of "Downeasters," they were perfectly astounded by this second specimen of life in the wilderness; the men, being especially unused to bush-fighting and the use of the rifle, were at a loss how to proceed. Wyeth, however, acted as a skillful commander. He got all his horses into camp and secured them; then, making a breastwork of his packs of goods, he charged his men to remain in garrison, and not to stir out of their fort. For himself, he mingled with the other leaders, determined to take his share in the conflict.

In the meantime, an express had been sent off to the rendezvous for reinforcements. Captain Sublette, and his associate, Campbell, were at their camp when the express came galloping across the plain, waving his cap and giving the alarm: "Blackfeet! Blackfeet! a fight in the upper part of the valley — to arms! to arms!"

The alarm was passed from camp to camp. It was a common cause. Every one turned out with horse and rifle. The Nez Percés and Flatheads joined. As fast as horsemen could arm and mount they galloped off; the valley was soon alive with white men and red men scouring at full speed.

Sublette ordered his men to keep to the camp, being recruits from St. Louis, and unused to Indian warfare. He and his friend Campbell prepared for action. Throwing off their coats, rolling up their sleeves, and arming themselves with pistols and rifles, they mounted their horses and dashed forward among the first. As they rode along, they made their wills in soldier-like style; each stating how his effects should be disposed of in case of his death, and appointing the other his executor.

The Blackfeet warriors had supposed the brigade of Milton Sublette all the foe they had to deal with, and were astonished to behold the whole valley suddenly swarming with horsemen, galloping to the field of action. They withdrew into their fort, which was completely hid from sight in the dark and tangled wood. Most of their women and children had retreated to the mountains. The trappers now sallied forth and approached the swamp, firing into the thickets at random; the Blackfeet had a better sight at their adversaries, who were in the open field, and a half-breed was wounded in the shoulder.

When Captain Sublette arrived, he urged to penetrate the swamp and storm the fort, but all hung back in awe of the dismal horrors of the place, and the danger of attacking such desperadoes in their savage den. The very Indian allies, though accustomed to bush-fighting, regarded it as almost impenetrable, and full of frightful danger. Sublette was not to be turned from his purpose, but offered to lead the way into the swamp. Campbell stepped forward to accompany him. Before entering the perilous wood, Sublette took his brothers aside, and told them that in case he fell, Campbell, who knew his will, was to be his executor. This done, he grasped his rifle and pushed into the thickets, followed by Campbell. Sinclair, the partisan from Arkansas, was at the edge of the wood with his brother and a few of his men. Excited by the gallant example of the two friends, he pressed forward to share their dangers.

The swamp was produced by the labors of the beaver, which, by

After remaining here a few days a violent dispute arose between Stephens and Fitzpatrick about the price of the horses which the latter was to give to the former for the

damming up a stream, had inundated a portion of the valley. The place was all overgrown with woods and thickets, so closely matted and entangled, that it was impossible to see ten paces ahead, and the three associates in peril had to crawl along, one after another, making their way by putting the branches and vines aside; but doing it with caution, lest they should attract the eye of some lurking marksman. They took the lead by turns, each advancing about twenty yards at a time, and now and then hallooing to their men to follow. Some of the latter gradually entered the swamp, and followed a little distance in the rear.

They had now reached a more open part of the wood, and had glimpses of the rude fortress from between the trees. It was a mere breastwork, as we have said, of logs and branches, with blankets, buffalo robes, and the leathern covers of lodges, extended round the top as a screen. The movements of the leaders, as they groped their way, had been discried by the sharp-sighted enemy. As Sinclair, who was in the advance, was putting some branches aside, he was shot through the body. He fell on the spot. "Take me to my brother," said he to Campbell. The latter gave him in charge to some of the men, who conveyed him out of the swamp.

Sublette now took the advance. As he was reconnoitering the fort, he perceived an Indian peeping through an aperture. In an instant his rifle was levelled and discharged, and the ball struck the savage in the eye. While he was reloading, he called to Campbell, and pointed out to him the hole; "Watch that place," said he, "and you will soon have a fair chance for a shot." Scarce had he uttered the words, when a ball struck him in the shoulder, and almost wheeled him around. His first thought was to take hold of his arm with his other hand, and move it up and down. He ascertained to his satisfaction, that the bone was not broken. The next moment he was so faint he could not stand. Campbell took him in his arms and carried him out of the thicket. The same shot that struck Sublette, wounded another man in the head.

A brisk fire was now opened by the mountaineers from the wood, answered occasionally from the fort. Unluckily, the trappers and their allies, in searching for the fort, had got scattered, so that Wyeth, and a number of Nez Percés, approached the fort on the northwest side, while others did the same on the opposite quarter. A cross-fire thus took place, which occasionally did mischief to friends as well as foes. An Indian was shot down, close to Wyeth, by a ball which, he was convinced, had been sped from the rifle of a trapper on the other side of the fort.

The number of whites and their Indian allies, had by this time so much increased by arrivals from the rendezvous, that the Blackfeet were completely overmatched. They kept doggedly in their fort, however, making no offer of surrender. An occasional firing into the breastwork was kept up during the day. Now and then, one of the Indian allies, in bravado, would rush up to the fort, fire over the ramparts, tear off a buffalo robe or a scarlet blanket, and return with it in triumph to his comrades. Most of the savage garrison that fell, however, were killed in the first part of the attack.

At one time it was resolved to set fire to the fort; and the squaws belonging to the allies were employed to collect combustibles. This, however, was abandoned; the Nez Percés being unwilling to destroy the robes and blankets, and other spoils of the enemy, which they felt sure would fall into their hands.

The Indians, when fighting, are prone to taunt and revile each

beaver skins of Gant's which Stephens had sold to Fitzpatrick. No person interfered, for we all knew that it was a dishonest transaction from beginning to end. Fitzpatrick

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other. During one of the pauses of the battle, the voice of the Blackfeet chief was heard.

"So long," said he. "as we had powder and ball, we fought you in the open field; when those were spent, we retreated here to die with our women and children. You may burn us in our fort; but, stay by our ashes, and you who are so hungry for fighting, will soon have enough. There are four hundred lodges of our brethern at hand. They will soon be here— their arms are strong—their hearts are big—they will avenge us!"

This speech was translated two or three times by Nez Percé and creole interpreters. By the time it was rendered into English the chief was made to say, that four hundred lodges of his tribe were attacking the encampment at the other end of the valley. Every one now was for hurrying to the defense of the rendezvous. A party was left to keep watch upon the fort; the rest galloped off to the camp. As night came on, the trappers drew out of the swamp, and remained about the skirts of the wood. By morning, their companions returned from the rendezvous, with the report that all was safe. As the day opened, they ventured within the swamp and approached the fort. All was silent. They advanced up to it without opposition. They entered; it had been abandoned in the night, and the Blackfeet had effected their retreat, carrying off their wounded on litters made of branches, leaving bloody traces, on the herbage. The bodies of ten Indians were found within the fort; among them the one shot in the eye by Sublette. The Blackfeet afterwards reported that they had lost twenty-six warriors in this battle. Thirty-two horses were likewise found killed; among them were some of those recently carried off from Sublette's party, in the night; which showed that these were the very savages that had attacked him. They proved to be an advance party of the main body of Blackfeet, which had been upon the trail of Sublette's party. Five white men and one half-breed were killed, and several wounded. Seven of the Nez Percés were also killed, and six wounded. They had an old chief who was reputed as invulnerable. In the course of the action he was hit by a spent ball and threw up blood; but his skin was unbroken. His people were now fully convinced that he was proof against powder and ball.

A striking circumstance is related as having occurred the morning after the battle. As some of the trappers and their Indian allies were approaching the fort, through the woods, they beheld an Indian woman, of noble form and features, leaning against a tree. Their surprise at her lingering here alone, to fall into the hands of her enemies, was dispelled, when they saw the corpse of a warrior at her feet. Either she was so lost in grief as not to perceive their approach, or a proud spirit kept her silent and motionless. The Indians set up a yell, on discovering her, and before the trappers could interfere, her mangled body fell upon the corpse which she had refused to abandon. We have heard this anecdote descredited by one of the leaders who had been in the battle, but the fact may have taken place without his seeing it, and been concealed from him. It is an instance of female devotion, even to the death, which we are well disposed to believe and to record.

After the battle, the brigade of Milton Sublette, together with the free trappers, and Wyeth's New England band, remanied some days at the rendezvous, to see if the main body of Blackfeet intended to make an attack; nothing of the kind occurring, they once more put themselves in motion, and proceeded on their route towards the southwest.

having every thing in his own possession, was therefore contented and as independent as any mean man who had it in his power to make his own terms. Stephens, on the con-

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It will be observed that Leonard makes no mention of the killing of the Blackfoot chief, by the Flathead chief and Antoine Godin.

The sequel to this affair occurred some two or three years later, when Antoine Godin was located at Fort Hall, on the Snake River, under Wyeth. A party of Blackfeet appeared on the side opposite to this fort, under the leadership of a notorious desperado named Bird, a former employee of the Hudson Bay Company, who, having been made a prisoner by the Blackfeet, in one of their numerous engagements, had remained with them and was at this time quite an important man among them. From the opposite side of the river he requested Godin to come over and purchase their furs. This was very tempting, and Godin, without suspecting treachery, hurried across the river. He sat down to smoke with the Indians, when Bird signalled to some of them, who shot him in the back. While he was yet alive, Bird tore his scalp off and cut the letters "N. J. W.," Wyeth's initials, on his forehead. In this melancholy manner ended the tragedy of Pierre's Hole.

Nor does Leonard make any mention of any of the prominent characters, with the exception of Fitzpatrick, who were engaged in this affair. William L. Sublette and his friend Robert Campbell, two of the most renowned of the mountain-men, are not mentioned. They no doubt knew the danger of the undertaking to drive the Blackfeet from their position, and as they were going into the brush, they, with others, made their wills, in mountain style, verbally to their friends. Wyeth's raw recruits from the East were not allowed to engage in the attack and were kept behind their breastworks.

William L. Sublette was unable to start on his return to the frontier as had been planned; having been severely wounded in this engagement, he was compelled to wait until his wound was healed. Some of the company, consisting of seven men of Wyeth's party who had become discouraged and were returning home, with Alfred K. Stephens and four others, the joint party including a Mr. More of Boston, a Mr. Foy of Mississippi, and two grandsons of the celebrated Daniel Boone — becoming impatient at the delay, set out from the rendezvous to return east, an extremely hazardous undertaking for such a small company. They had been out but one day, when they were attacked in Jackson Hole by a band of some twenty Blackfeet. More and Foy were killed and Stephens severely wounded. He, with the rest of the party, returned to the rendezvous, where he lingered until the 30th of July, when he died, just after starting for St. Louis in company with William L. Sublette. According to Leonard's account they did not arrive at the rendezvous until August 2, that is, from the Laramie River, with the main body of Fitzpatrick's men.

It is interesting to follow the movements of the Blackfeet. Those who came so near being annihilated in the battle of Pierre's Hole, after their fortunate escape were not long in joining the main body, who were still hovering about the rendezvous, with a view of attacking detached parties, as they did Stephens and his company. The camps of Bonneville and Fontenelle were too well guarded for them to venture an attack and the battle of Pierre's Hole being still fresh in their memory, they were very circumspect, and allowed William Sublette and his party to depart peacefully for the East. This band finally left the country by way of the Wind River valley, where they fell foul of their inveterate enemies the Crows, by whom they were attacked and defeated, with forty killed and the remainder scattered like fugitives throughout the Crow country.

The Blackfeet in the north are much the same as the Apaches in the south — the uncompromising enemies of the whites as well as of many other Indian tribes. Their hostility to the whites is by many

trary, was in a bad situation—having paid before hand, and not being able to force measures, had to put up with what he could get. Finally he succeeded in hiring four men, and started back to the mouth of the Laramies to secure the fur which he had sold to Fitzpatrick.* He had not left many days, however, until he was overtaken by a scouting party of those Indians we had surrounded in the fort. Two of his men were killed,† and himself shot through the thigh — having the two mules along, which was the ballance of the original stock, one of which was killed, and the other brought back the wounded Stephens, who died in a few days afterwards from mortification taking place in the wounded leg.

A few days after this occurrence, we were visited by a party belonging to the Nor-West‡ or British trading company, from whom we were enabled to learn the way the Blackfeet Indians had got possession and fought under the British flag. It appeared by their story that these Indians some months previous, had fell on a party belonging to their company — but few of whom escaped to tell

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attributed to the killing of some of their number by Lewis and Clark; but if such is the case they must have long ere this satisfied their revengeful feelings. Probably no tribe in the West is responsible for the death of so many whites as the Blackfeet. The more probable cause is that the whites in the south furnished their enemies with arms and equipment similar to those furnished them by the British fur companies, and made them quite as formidable and dangerous as they were themselves. With their primitive weapons some of the tribes were almost exterminated by the relentless wars waged on them by the hostile Blackfeet. They also furnished goods at second hand to some of their less fortunate brethren, and in this way did quite a thriving and profitable business.

*We have here a very good explanation for the movements of Stephens, who no doubt intended to return to the mouth of the Laramie and recover the furs he had sold to Fitzpatrick, and dispose of them, or carry them to St. Louis.

†More and Foy.

‡The company here referred to was the Hudson Bay Company, as there was no Northwest Company in existence at this period. These two companies consolidated in 1821, and were at this time trading wholly under the name of the Hudson Bay Company, the Northwest Company went out of existence with the consolidation. They were both British Companies.

the fate of their comrades — and among the spoils which they obtained, was this flag, which they used as a signal to deceive and mislead their enemies, whom they might meet in these extensive plains.*

Sept. 1st. After remaining here until to-day, during which time Mr. Saunders joined our company of fifteen, which made up for the one that was killed, and who was the only one besides myself, of Capt. Gant's company; leaving the balance with Fitzpatrick — some hiring with their equipments which they purchased on credit. — We set to work making preparation to start the following morning, on our second attempt to reach some region where we could prosecute our business of trapping to some advantage. The conditions of our agreement were the same, as on the first expedition, viz:—each man to find an equal portion of traps, guns, and ammunition, and to receive an equal share of the peltries which we might catch.

On the morning of the 2nd Sept., having every thing ready, we left the rendezvous, all in a fine humor.† We arrived on the head waters of the Multenemough‡ river without any thing of moment occurring—where we made our fall's hunt. After travelling near 100 miles South West

*The party here referred to was that of John Work, of the Hudson Bay Company, who succeeded Peter Skene Ogden in command of these mountain expeditions. He left Fort Vancouver August 18, 1831, and returned in July, 1833. Work had trouble with the Blackfeet, had frequent skirmishes with them in which he lost some men and frequently met parties of the Rocky Mountain and American fur companies. He trapped on the Jefferson branch of the Missouri, Salmon River, and elsewhere. On the 30th of January, 1832, he was attacked by three hundred Blackfeet on a small branch of the Missouri. One of his men was killed and two wounded; the loss of the Blackfeet was considerable.

†Captain Bonneville arrived at Pierre's Hole shortly after Leonard's departure, and it is not likely he saw him this year as he does not mention him.

‡The river here referred to is the Willamette, in Oregon. The name Multnomah was given to it by Lewis and Clark, when they made their famous journey across the continent. Leonard may have been mistaken in regard to this as we shall see later.

from the top of the mountains, or from the head of Lewis river, we got totally out of the range of the buffaloe. We were told by the natives that those animals were never known further west, which is something singular, as the country is just the same, if not better as to grass. These Indians subsist principally upon salmon, and such other fish as they can catch, with the assistance of roots, buds, berries, & some small game, which they kill with the bow and arrow. They are generally of a more swarthy nature, small and cowardly, and travel in small gangs of from four to five families—this they are compelled to do in order to keep from starvation. They are always roving from plain to plain, and from valley to valley — never remaining in one place longer than till game gets scarce. When on the move the women have to perform the most laborious part — having charge of the transportation of their baggage. While doing this, a female, the most feeble of their sex, will carry a load of perhaps a hundred weight a whole day, without manifesting the least fatigue or complaint. This tribe, which I believe is called the Bawnack, or Shoshonies, are the most indolent, and have the least ambition of any tribe we had yet discovered. They are lazy and dirty; and only strive to get as much as will keep them from starving. They are no way ill disposed towards the whites, or at least they never disturbed us — with the exception of stealing a few of our traps.* We continued moving down the Multenemough for several hundred miles, during which time we subsisted principally upon beaver, deer, and bighorn—though we still had a little jirked buffaloe meat. Between trapping and trading we had made quite a profitable hunt. To get a beaver skin from these Indians worth eight or ten dollars, never cost

*This description is scarcely in accord with what we know of the Bannocks or Shoshones (Snakes). It seems rather to apply to the Pai-utes or Diggers (Root Diggers).

more than an awl, a fish hook, a knife, a string of beads, or something equally as trifling.*

*As we follow the peregrinations of the above, we are more fully convinced that he was one of Sinclair's free trappers. George Nidever who was one of this company, says: "The original company under Robert Bean had left Fort Smith, Arkansas, about forty strong in May, 1830. It included many men afterwards well known in California, which country they entered at different times and by different routes. Such were Graham, Naile, Nidever, Williams, Price, Leese, and Dye." Their adventures are related at some length by both Nidever and Dye down to the time when the party was divided in New Mexico in the spring of 1831; and the later adventures of the party of fifteen that went north to Green River are recounted by Nidever, who says that Graham, Naile, and Price were still with him. He refers to the year 1831, to Pierre's Hole in 1832, and Green River in 1833. This was Sinclair's party, he being also from Arkansas. Leonard joined them at Pierre's Hole and after the death of Sinclair Mr. Saunders joined them, Leonard stating that they were the only two of the original Gant company who were in the party. Some authorities state there were fifteen men, while others say fifteen and the leader — sixteen in all.

The Graham mentioned above received a great deal of notoriety some years later in California, as being the central figure in what was called the "Graham affair." It occurred in 1840. Alfred Robinson gives the following account of the same: "Graham had a fine horse, which he had trained for the turf, and had challenged the whole country to the course. At length a countryman of his, residing in the Pueblo de los Angeles made arrangements to race the noble gelding, with a high-mettled racer from San Diego. A document was drawn up on the occasion, which was intended solely to bind more strictly the parties interested. This document was construed into a plan to overturn the government — a plan to plunder and destroy what was left of the missions — a plan to deprive the Californians of their lives and country. As ridiculous as this may appear to the reader, much less, it is a fact, to which I can testify from information I received on the spot, shortly after its occurrence. This intelligence was secretly conveyed to all the authorities throughout the country, with explicit orders from Governor Alvarado to secure and imprison the foreigners. But to take the Tennesseean [Graham], it was thought requisite to take an armed force, under the command of the renowned José Castro. They found him asleep in his rude dwelling, when the report of a pistol awakened him and he sprang quickly towards the door. Several villains discharged their pistols at him, so near, as to fire his shirt in many places. He attempted to escape but was seized and dragged to prison.

"As soon as practical on the part of the government, a vessel was chartered, and the Americans and Englishmen who had been collected at different points were embarked, in chains, and sent to San Blas.

"This achievement was followed by a public expression of thanks to the Omnipotent power who thus saved California from destruction. Mass was celebrated, following which Governor Alvarado circulated his famous proclamation.

"Almost every foreigner in the whole of California was arrested, and many were collected at the sea-ports, of whom forty-five at least were sent to San Blas."

Bancroft does not give Graham a very good character.

We shall now try to follow Milton Sublette, Wyeth, and the free trappers on their way from Pierre's Hole after the engagement with the Blackfeet. On the 24th of July, 1832, Wyeth, who only wished a safe escort out of the Blackfoot country, and Milton Sublette again set out on their journey. They went south across Snake River, and then took a southwesterly direction to the Portneuf River, and thence

As winter was approaching, we began to make arrangements to return to some more favourable climate, by

to the Snake River near the American Falls, where they arrived on the thirteenth of August. Their further course for many weeks lay among the streams that empty into the Snake from the south, where Wyeth, in order perhaps to gain experience, tried his hand at trapping. He was moderately successful, but was compelled to cache the furs he accumulated, because his party was too small to transport them. On the 29th of August Wyeth parted company with Sublette (Chittenden).

"We have thus eliminated from our party Wyeth and his raw New Englanders, who spent the following winter on the Columbia River with the Hudson Bay Company. We know that Leonard did not accompany them. It is altogether likely that as soon as the fall hunt began the free trappers went to the headwaters of the Mary's River, as stated by Nidever, while the parties of Sublette and Wyeth trapped on the above-mentioned streams. Meek states that Sublette trapped on the headwaters of the Humboldt to some extent and on the Owyhee, and through a desert country in which they suffered dreadfully and had to resort to the most repulsive methods of satisfying their hunger and thirst. In this sad plight they reached the Snake River. Here the back of one of the mules becoming sore, the packing in the saddle was taken out and a large pin accidentally found, which caused the sore back. They were not long in bending the pin into the shape of a fish-hook, and in weaving a line of hair taken from the horses' tails, the fish were soon frying in the pan which supplied them with an excellent supper. They caught an additional supply and carried them along for future use. They went on their way rejoicing, says Meek, with their five fishes tied to the saddle, if without any loaves. They then followed up Payette River to the lake of that name, when Meek with three companions went as far north as the Salmon River. Meek then leaves for the east side of the mountains with Fitzpatrick and Bridger, trapping on the headwaters of the Missouri River, and finally going into winter-quarters at the forks of the Snake River." We have here the wanderings of Milton Sublette's company; judging from Leonard's description of his travels, we must conclude that he was with the free trappers of Sinclair. In support of this we have the account of Nidever which practically agrees with that of Leonard, and we know him to have been one of the fifteen.

Nidever says: "After lengthy trapping excursions on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains between Texas and Nebraska, in November, 1831, crossed from the Platte to Green River where he went into winter-quarters. Early in August, 1832, three parties under Nidever, Frapp, and Wyatt [possibly Wyeth] *set out from the Pierre Hole rendezvous on trapping expeditions westward. Nidever's destination was Ogden's River, which he then called Mary River, a small stream about south-west of Salt Lake.* Frapp's company was mostly Canadians and half breeds [the other party he does not describe]. The next morning they discovered a band of four hundred war-painted Blackfeet." He then gives a very poor account of the battle of Pierre's Hole as compared with other authorities, although the leading events are perfectly plain. He mentions the wounding of "William Sinclair, Phelps, Sublette, and others, and fifty Blackfeet killed."

Hastening forward from that hostile region the three companies soon parted, and Nidever set his traps on Ogden River where he remained, with fair success, until October. (It will be remembered that he stated he was in command of one company, and it is reasonable to suppose the fifteen remained together for protection, etc. Leonard says that they arrived in the Buffalo country about the first of November.) He then returned to the eastern slope (Rocky Mountains) for the winter, and came again the following spring to Green River [the Green River rendezvous, 1833] — Bancroft, *History of Nevada*, p. 39. This is strictly in accord with Leonard's movements, as given in his narrative, with the exception of the trapping on the Multenemough, which must be an error.

collecting our fur, and giving each man his share of the baggage. We travelled back with great speed, and arrived in the buffaloe country on the first of November,* where we met with a nation of Snake Indians, with whom we made some small trades for buffaloe robes and skins for the winter. The manners and customs of the Snake Indians are very similar to those of the Flatheads, with the exception of stealing, which they consider no harm. The Snake Indians, or as some call them, the Shoshonies, were once a powerful nation, possessing a glorious hunting ground on the east side of the mountains; but they, like the Flatheads, have been almost annihilated by the revengeful Blackfeet, who, being supplied with firearms were enabled to defeat all Indian opposition. Their nation has been entirely broken up and scattered throughout all this wild region. The Shoshonies are a branch of the once powerful Snake tribe, as are also the more abject and forlorn tribe of Shuckers, or more generally termed, Diggers and Root eaters, who keep in the most retired recesses of the mountains and streams, subsisting on the most unwholesome food, and living the most like animals of any race of beings.†

We left the Snake Indians and took a more Southern

*Leonard and his company made their fall hunt on the headwaters of the Humboldt (Ogden or Mary's River), or possibly on the headwaters of the Owyhee and not on the Multnomah or Willamette, for the following reasons: they could scarcely have covered the distance in the time given by him and had any time left for the fall hunt; the direction they took in traveling to the southwest would scarcely have brought them to the headwaters of the latter stream; his description of the Indians does not apply to those of southern Oregon nor to those along the Mary's and Owyhee rivers. Milton Sublette, with whom they started out, made his fall hunt in this locality, and they no doubt did the same, as the field was amply large. Nidever, who was probably one of Leonard's company, states that they made their fall hunt on the Humboldt, and the most convincing circumstance is that, by traveling down the Willamette two hundred miles (the river being little more than this distance in length), they would have found themselves at the Hudson Bay Company's post of Fort Vancouver.

†Much confusion exists with regard to this tribe of Snake or Shoshonie Indians, as will be seen by comparing this with the preceding paragraph. They are however branches of one and the same family, the former much degenerated, being the much despised Shuckers, Diggers, or Root Eaters. Leonard is in error in calling them

direction to the Bear river, which empties into Big Salt Lake — followed this river for two days, and then crossed over to Weabers river. These two rivers are about the same size, say from two to three hundred yards wide, & from three to four hundred miles long. — They run South parallel with each other, and empty into the Big Salt Lake on the Nor[t]h side, at no great distance apart.— This lake is much larger than any other west of the mountains — supposed to be 200 miles long, and near the same in width. It is surrounded on the North, about the mouths of the rivers, by a mountainous & broken country, and on the South & West by a barren, sandy plain, in a manner incapable of vegetation. There is also a hill or peak near the centre of it so high that the snow remains on it the greater part of the year. The water is of such a brackish nature that only part of it freezes in the coldest weather of the winter season. Its briny substance prevents all vegetation within a considerable distance of the margin of the lake. The Bear and Weabers rivers are the principal streams by which it is fed. In the Spring of the year, when the snow and ice melts and runs down off the mountains, this lake rises very high, on account of it having no outlet; and in the fall, or latter part of summer it sinks — leaving salt one and two inches thick on some parts of its shores. It is situated on the west side of the mountains, between the waters of the Columbia and Rio Colerado, or Red river, and is called by the natives, the Great Salt Lake. The rivers which empty into this lake abound with many kinds of fish, such as trout, cat-fish, and others suitable for hook and line, particularly at their mouths.

Bawnacks (Bannocks); this is a distinct tribe as we know them, although of the same family. The latter were one of the most warlike tribes in the mountains, and in this respect resembling their plains brethren, the Comanches. In later years they became the banditti of the plains, along the California and Oregon trails, causing the early overland emigrants much trouble, in this respect differing greatly from their mountain brethren the Shoshonies.

This family (Shoshonean) represents the chivalry of the mountain

Where the country is low, and small streams empties into them, the dams of the beaver causes the water to overflow its banks, and makes a swampy, marshy country for miles round. People trapping on these streams are compelled to construct canoes of Bull and buffaloe skins, in order to visit their traps.

On leaving this lake we continued our journey towards the head waters of the Colerado, which stream empties into the Gulf of Calafornia. After a tedious, but not unpleasant tramp of several days we came to a beautiful situation on one of the main feeders of this river, where we halted to make preparations to spend the winter — it now being about the middle of November. We had remained here but a few days, during which time we were occupied in building tents, &c, for winter, when we were visited by a party of 70 or 80 Indian warriors. These Indians manifested the best of friendship towards us, while in our camp, and said they were going to war with the Snake Indians — whose country we were now in — and they also said they belonged to the Crow nation on the East side of the mountains. In all the intercourse had with them, while they were with us, not the least symptom of deception was discovered, and they parted with us manifesting as much regret as if we had been old acquaintances. But we were doomed to experience the faith of the Crow nation — for, on the same night of their departure, they returned and stole five of our best hunting horses. This was a serious loss to us, and a valuable prize for them—for an Indian belonging to these hunting and warring tribes is poor indeed

and plains tribes, as well as the lowest of all American Indians.

The description of the Shoshonies or Snakes in the last paragraph, is in accord with the description of other writers who visited them in the early days, Ross, Cox, Irving, etc. They are good representatives of the best mountain tribes in this territory. As stated, the terrible wars have depleted their numbers, but they compare well with the Nez Percés and Flatheads and rove over a vast territory, being well supplied with horses. Alexander Ross who knew them in their most prosperous days gives probably the best description of them.

if he is not the owner of a horse, as it is upon this animal they much depend for success in chasing the buffaloe, and upon him greatly depends the fate of the battle.

Having a man in our company who had once been a captive in their village, and who could talk and understand a little of their language, we resolved at all hazards to give chase and retake our horses. We steered across the mountains towards the Southern head waters of the Missouri river. The first stream we came to on the east side is called Bighorn river — down which stream we travelled for some days, until we came to their village situated at the mouth of Stinking river. In this village we found a negro man,* who informed us that he first came to this country with Lewis & Clark — with whom he also returned to the State of Missouri, and in a few years returned again with a Mr. Mackinney,† a trader on the Missouri river, and has remained here ever since — which is about ten or twelve years. He has acquired a correct knowledge of their manner of living, and speaks their language fluently. He has rose to be quite a considerable character, or chief, in their village; at least he assumes all the dignities of a chief, for he has four wives with whom he lives alternately. This is the custom of many of the chiefs.

After informing the negro of our stolen horses, he told us that they had them, and that the reason they were taken from us was because we were found in their enemies' country, and that they supposed we were going to trade them guns, &c. By giving the chiefs some trifling presents our horses were produced in as good trim as when they left us. (I shall say nothing more of these Indians at present, as I

*This is the renegade Rose, as described in Irving's *Astoria*. He was never with Lewis and Clark: we shall have occasion farther on to give a more complete account of him.

†*Mackinney:* We know of no trader on the Missouri, by this name at the time mentioned; he probably refers to Kenneth MacKenzie, king of the Upper Missouri Outfit, American Fur Company, who was a very prominent man in his time, but it is evidently a mistake as to time, as the latter did not appear upon the river until after 1821.

shall have occasion to speak of them when I again visit their village.)

About the first of January 1833, the game getting scarce in this vicinity, the Indians left us & moved down the river. We remained at this station employing our time in hunting, fishing, and such other sports as we could come at, but without any particular occurrence, until the 20th of February, when we set out on our spring hunt. We crossed the country to the river Platte without any difficulty, and continued down this stream to the junction of it and the Laramies, where we had joined Fitzpatrick's company in the previous spring, and where also we had parted with Capt. Gant. On encamping for the night we found a tree off which the bark was pealed, and wrote on with a coal, that, by searching in a certain place mentioned, we would find a letter, — which we did, and found the document, written in Gant's hand, which stated that only two parties had returned, viz: — Washburns and his own — and also that Capt. Blackwell had come up from the States with a supply of provision, merchandize, ammunition, &c. The letter went on to detail the hardships, sufferings, and misfortunes which they had encountered, which only amounted to this: that they had lost their horses last winter, and had been to Santa Fe and purchased more — while crossing the mountain his party had accidentally met with Washburn and his company — that they then ascertained for the first, that the company was insolvent and had declined doing business in this country — and that they [Gant's party] had left this place in September last, to go and establish a trading post on the Arkansas river, with the Arpahee Indians.* The letter closed by stating

*We have no knowledge of the location of this trading-post; the only other trading-post on the Arkansas at this period was Bent's Fort established in 1829. The Arapahoes were at this time located in the eastern part of the present state of Colorado, between the Arkansas and the South Platte.

that Stephen's party had left him and joined Fitzpatrick. This letter was directed to Mr. Saunders, who was in our company, and who, Gant supposed, would be the first to return.

Soon after the contents of the letter were made known to the company, some men were sent across the Laramies river to see if they could make any discoveries of importance, as we could see the remains of what we supposed to be an old encampment on its banks. These men, after searching for some time, found where several buffaloe had been slaughtered, and from the manner in which it was done, it was evident that it was the work of a party of hostile Indians — and not being able to trace which direction they had steered, we were at a great loss to know what to do — having no person to act as commander. There was much difference of opinion and great contention about which way we should take. Our object was, if possible, to avoid meeting with the Indians, as our force was small, and not well prepared to encounter a band of savages defended with firearms. Finally, it was decided that we should leave the rivers and strike for the mountains — thinking this route the least dangerous. After travelling an hour or so, we suddenly met with a body of eight or ten on horse back, who we judged to be hunting — not being backward about meeting with such a number, we marched boldly towards them. On this they immediately galloped off under full speed, in the direction which we were going. Thinking the main body to be in that direction, we thought to avoid them by turning to the right and keeping near the river. We did not advance far in this direction, however, until we suddenly came upon their encampment. Being thus led into their strong hold by mere accident, we held a hurried consultation as to our own safety. Their horses and white lodges could be distinctly seen although we were

some distance off, and we flattered ourselves that we had not yet been discovered by any in the village, and that we might yet escape. With this hope we sounded a retreat and marched slowly & silently back for the purpose of sheltering ourselves with the timber, where we intended to build a fort immediately, for we knew that even if we were not discovered now, the party we first met would give the alarm, and the chase would be commenced. In going along, juking from bluff to bluff, in order to avoid being seen, we were overtaken by a single Indian on horseback. He would ride up at full gallop within 20 or 30 steps of us, and then suddenly wheel, ride back towards the camp, and then return as before. After repeating this several times, some of our men, when he came close, raised their guns, and he, thinking there might be danger in running away, came to us and told us that the chief had sent for us to come to his tent, to eat, smoke and be friendly. Not having confidence in his good intentions, all declined the invitation, but told the messenger that we would just retire into the timber, (where we intended to be occupied in the meantime in building a fort,) and that if the chief wished to have any thing to say to us, he could come there — for which we started into the woods, taking this fellow with us, with the intention of keeping him until the fort would be erected.

After going but a short distance our prisoner broke loose, and immediately ran onto some rising ground, where he made his horse perform many singular feats as a signal for his followers. We galloped off as fast as we could, but were soon surrounded on all sides, without any thing to shelter us, except a hole formed by the sinking of water — which are very numerous in some of these plains. Into this hole we drove our horses, and expected to reach the top in time to keep the Indians at bay, and make peace with them. Before we got our horses properly secured in this

hole there was hundreds of red men standing above and eagerly looking down upon us, uttering the most terrifying yells of vengeance, brandishing their guns, bows and spears as if they would devour us.— We were in just such a situation now, as is calculated to bring on despair, with all its horrifying feelings, — each man holding his gun cocked and ready, resolved to sell his life only with the last drop of blood.— We stood in this situation, for a few minutes, waiting for them to commence, when there was one rushed into their ranks apparently much excited, who on addressing a few words to the warriors, they all put down their arms, and made signs to us to come out, that they would not molest us. This we did, but it was with a watchful, jealous eye. The man whose timely arrival seemed to have put a stop to their designs, and who doubtless here saved our lives, now came forward and signified to us that we had better go with them to their camp, and eat, drink and smoke, and he would exert his influence not to have us hurt — which advice we accordingly followed — taking our horses with us. On arriving at their camp, we found two who could talk the Crow language. The Rickarees* (the nation in whose hands we now were) on being at war with the Crow nation took these two prisoners, as they told us, and adopted them as their brethren.— After manifesting a desire to be friendly with them, by smoking, &c. these Crow prisoners informed us that, had it not been for the

*Aricaras, commonly called Rees by the traders, next to the Blackfeet were more dreaded by the whites than any other northern tribe. The outrages and loss of life suffered at their hands form a mournful chapter in the history of the Missouri Valley.

The principal characteristic of the Aricara Indians, so far as it relates to the fur-trade, was their treacherous and warlike attitude toward the whites. What can have been the cause of their bad faith and their many atrocities has always been a mystery. They were friends today and enemies tomorrow. One party of trappers they would treat with hospitality; the next they would seek to destroy. After Colonel Leavenworth's campaign, which was supposed to have subdued them, they became more troublesome than ever before. They abandoned their old villages and moved up to the neighborhood of the Mandans. They soon returned, however, *and some years later migrated,*

timely arrival of the chief, when we were in the hole, we would most certainly have been cut to pieces. This is altogether probable. The feelings of every individual, as well as those of myself, when surrounded in this hole, were horrible in the extreme. The thought struck me, as I leaned against a rock, that here I must end my career. Our feelings may be imagined, but not described.

The Crow prisoners told us that the only reason they knew why the chief had interceded for us, was because he had not previously been consulted on the subject, (having been absent when we were discovered in the plain.) This chief took a particular liking for us, and seemed determined to save us from the destructive vengeance of his people. He prepared a comfortable lodge for our own accommodation, in which we slept and eat. We remained in this situation two days and part of the third night, without any thing to disturb us — during which time the Crow prisoners had many questions to ask about their own people. They appeared to be well treated, but notwithstanding they were anxious to make their escape. About midnight of the third night, our friendly chief, who slept with us every night, awoke us all, and told us the horrors of our situation. He said that he had a great many bad men among his followers, and that he was unable to appease their angry nature much longer — the red man thirsts for

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it is said, to the North Platte. It was their depredations and murders committed upon trading parties in that region that induced N. J. Wyeth and others in 1833 to return from Green River to the States by way of the Bighorn, Yellowstone, and Missouri rather than risk the journey across the plains; and also led to the military expedition to the Upper Platte under Colonel Dodge in 1835.

These are the same Indians who furnished the horses for both Hunt's overland Astorians, in 1811, and General Ashley in 1823 (Chittenden).

Such was the character and reputation of the Indians with whom Leonard and his party had to deal, and they certainly maintained their reputation in their treatment of this company, the humane action of the chief can only be explained by the above.

blood — that he had succeeded in saving us thus far, through much exertion — & that now, as the whole village was wrapt in slumber, it would be a fit time for us to escape. He gave us strict orders to travel with all speed, and not to slacken our pace for two days and nights, for he said as soon as our departure would be known, we would be pursued. When our horses were brought out and all things was ready, we were escorted by the chief until daylight, when he left us and returned — manifesting the most intense anxiety for our safety. Indeed we were loth to part with this kind man, for we felt as if we were indebted to him for our lives. After parting with the chief, we pursued our journey with great speed, until the evening of the second day, when we were obliged to stop by a snow storm, which threatened us with destruction. We here turned our panting horses loose to graze, and made preparations to pass the night — which we did undisturbed. In the morning, two of the horses were not to be found. All search was in vain, and we gave them up for lost — concluding that they had fell into the hands of our enemies, and if so, we had better be on the move, as they were doubtless close at hand; but the owner, not being satisfied, again started out. — This detained us a while longer, when, apprehending danger from the Indians, we fired two guns as a signal for him that we were going, if he was yet in hearing. We resumed our journey, and after travelling a few miles, halted for the straggler — but he never returned.

The Rickarees are a powerful nation, consisting of about 1000 warriors. Their principal chief is called High-backed Wolf. Some twelve or fifteen years since, they were very friendly with the whites. This friendship was interrupted by the following circumstance: — About eight

or ten years since, Mr. Mackenzie* took a chief from three different nations (one of which was a Rickaree,) to Washington city, and while taking them back to their native wilds through Virginia, the Rickaree chief took sick and died in the city of Richmond. Mackenzie returned with the other two, Asnaboin and Mandan. While passing the Rickaree village, (which was then situated on the Missouri river, from whence they have since removed to this country,) Mackenzie stopped and informed them of the fate of their chief — which they disbelieved, and immediately declared war against the whites. They were much enraged, and made a violent attack upon the boats containing the merchandize of Mr. Mackenzie — a great part of which they destroyed, and have since been the cause of the death of numbers of white men.†

April 10th. Having lost all hope of being rejoined by our lost man, who we concluded had been captured by the Indians, we resumed our journey with 14 men.‡ — Beaver we found in abundance — catching more or less every day, and every thing seemed to promise a profitable business, until the 7th day of May — a day which will ever be remembered by each of us. Having encamped the night previous on a small creek in the Black Hills, or on the head waters of the river Platte, without timber or any thing to shelter ourselves, in case of an attack by the Indians, within 80 or 100 yards. We this evening again turned our horses loose

*This name has heretofore been printed *Mackinny* — by mistake. — PUB. [Note in original.]

†I am unable to find any trace of this delegation having visited Washington; neither the Indian Bureau nor the Bureau of Ethnology are able to furnish any information as to these Indians. From the above statement the time of their visit is rather indefinite, and is therefore very difficult to trace in the public prints, very meagre records having been kept at this early day by the government of these delegations of Indians who visited Washington. The records of the Virginia Historical Society make no mention of the death and burial of the Rickaree or Aricara, at the time mentioned, in Richmond.

‡It will be observed that Leonard checks the number of men, and up to the present time there must have been fifteen.

to graze, which is not by any means customary and much less prudent, while travelling through a country infested with hostile savages, as they are always hovering around the encampment, ready to lay hands on any thing which they fancy. But on the present occasion we thought ourselves secure, as we had not seen nor met with any Indians for several days. On the following morning our horses were in sight on a hill a little above the encampment. About 9 o'clock three of us started to bring them down preparatory to our start. As there was no danger apprehended, neither of us took our guns. When we got to the top of the hill the horses were not to be seen — having descended the hill on the other side. The other two men soon found their horses and started with them to camp. — After searching a while I found mine with several others. The horses appeared much frightened, and I began to apprehend some danger. Whilst leading my horse towards the camp, an Indian, armed with a bow and arrow, came rushing upon me. — I made several attempts to mount, but as often failed, for as I would spring to get on he would jump from under me. The savage now approached within about fifteen steps of me, and signified that he would slay me unless I stopped and delivered up my horse. I sprang behind a bunch of bushes, which afforded me a tolerable shelter. He then made signs to me that if I would deliver myself up he would not hurt me. But this I refused. My only weapon was a large knife, which I carried in a scabbard at my waist. I drew this out and proposed to meet him. He then gave me to understand, that if I would lay down the knife he would lay down the bow and arrow, and we would meet and be friends. This I also refused to do.— He made use of various inducements to get me from behind the bush, but I heeded them not, for I knew his intention was to kill me if it was in his power. He still advanced

slowly toward me. I had been in several dangerous situations with the Indians and wild beasts, — in some of which I had almost despaired. But none seemed to cause the same feeling as did my present predicament. Alone, and unarmed — my situation was distressing indeed. I had no chance of escaping, and an immediate and cruel death I knew would be my fate if I surrendered. Whilst reflecting on what to do, and looking at him through an aperture in the bush, he shot an arrow at me, which fortunately missed its aim, and struck a branch within a few inches of my face, and fell harmless to the ground. By this time he had got quite close and being below me on the hill side, the thought struck me that I might despatch him with a stone — for which purpose I stooped down to get one, and carelessly let my body move from the shelter afforded by the brush, and at that instant I felt the pointed arrow pierce my side. I jirked the weapon out immediately, and started to run, still holding to my horse. I expected every moment as I ran quartering past the Indian to receive another, which I most certainly would have done, if the savage had been in the possession of any more; and to run to the brush for those he had already discharged at me, would only be giving me time to escape. He then pursued me. After running a short distance I thought that my horse might be the means of saving my life, if I would leave him for the Indian, and accordingly I released my hold; but the Indian disregarded the horse and followed me. By this time, owing to the loss of blood from my wound, and the great excitement I was under, I began to grow weak and faint, for I thought that every moment would be my last, as I heard the Indian puffing & blowing in my rear. We were now within sight of our camp, and were fortunately discovered by the men then there, who immediately ran to my relief. When I seen the face of my

companions, I lost all my strength and fell prostrate to the ground. The Indian, foiled in his design on my life, retreated for the purpose of making sure of my horse, but in this he was also mistaken, for in turn he was pursued by my companions as hotly as he had chased me. When my mind again resumed its sway, I found myself in the camp carefully attended by my companions.

On entering into conversation with my companions, I found that I was not the only one who had encountered the Indians. I was ignorant of any more Indians being in the neighborhood than the one above alluded to, but it appeared by their story that, when the two men who started out with me, were returning with the horses, they came across a large body of Indians, supposed to be about 200, who, after a sharp engagement, in which one of our men, named Gillam, of Illinois, was killed, and two wounded, succeeded in taking all our horses except two. Whilst I was listening to this lamentable story, our spies came running to the camp, bringing the unwelcome tidings that the Indians were again approaching with great speed, determined to ride over us. Each man now gathered a robe, blanket, guns, and such things as he could not do without, & carried the wounded into the brush at the foot of the hill, where we immediately commenced building a fort. The Indians approached and surrounded our encampment very cautiously, thinking that they would take us by surprise, and capture man, beast and baggage without any difficulty — but they were outrageous when they found that there was no body at home. They made the best of their victory however, and took every thing we had left. — When they had completed the pillage, which was only done when they could no longer find any thing on which to lay their hands, they started off with their booty.— After they had travelled some distance they halted and collected in a circle, within

plain view of where we were, and smoked to the Sun, or Great Spirit. While going through this ceremony, some of them happened to discover us. On this, they quit smoking, left their horses and came on foot within 30 or 40 steps of us, — but on seeing our fort, which was only partly built, they turned away and left us, without making any attack. We remained in this situation until morning — those who were able, being occupied in completing our fort. Soon after daylight the Indians again made their appearance, and approached within a stones throw of the fort, and on reconnoitering our situation they concluded that we were too well defended for them to gain any advantage over us, — and the second time they left us without giving us a chance of trying our strength.

This morning I felt very weak and feeble from my wound, and began to fear that it was more serious than was at first supposed. About 10 o'clock the company was ready for the move, and I was packed between two horses. After travelling two or three miles we halted to rest near some brush — but not without having sentinels stationed for the purpose of keeping a vigilant look-out, for we still expected an attack from the Indians. Not long after we halted our sentinels informed us that the savages were again approaching. We immediately went into the brush and commenced throwing up a fort. They this time approached very cautiously, & seemed determined to put an end to our lives. When they observed that we were defended by a breast work, they halted, reconnoitered on every side, and finally gave up and left us. These Indians who had hung round our path so long, robbed us of so much necessary property, killed one and wounded three of us, and came so nigh exterminating our whole company, we found out, belonged to the Rickaree tribe —

the same who frightened us in the sink hole, on Platte river.

It was now that we had leisure to contemplate our situation. Some of us had laboured hard, encountered one danger only to be eclipsed by another. We had at times endured the most excruciating suffering from hunger and fatigue — living in constant communion with the terrors of a wilderness studded with savages and no less dangerous beasts of prey, for two long years, and now left destitute of every thing except an old greasy blanket, a rifle and a few loads of ammunition, some thousands of miles from our paternal homes. To reflect on our present situation was enough to fill every heart with all the horrors of remorse. In fact, we felt a disposition about this time to do that which would not have been right, had an opportunity afforded. When we first embarked in this business it was with the expectation that to ensure a fortune in the fur trade only required a little perseverance and industry. We were not told that we were to be constantly annoyed by the Indians, but that it only required the observance of a peaceful disposition on our part, to secure their friendship and even support. Some of the Indians with whom we had intercourse, it is true, had been of great advantage to us in our trapping expeditions; but then it would be of short duration, — for, if they would not render themselves obnoxious by their own treachery, our friendship with them would be sure to meet with an interruption through some ingenious artifice of a neighbouring jealous tribe. Such had been the life we had led, and such the reward.*

*Such has been the experience not only of Leonard but of a great majority of the free trappers in the mountains. A large number of those who were so fortunate as to escape the Indians and the dangers of the mountains, were sure to fall victims to the heartless traders, who were sure to secure the furs for but little more than the Indians paid when they robbed the trappers. Between the hostile Indians and the wily trader the poor trapper was indeed to be pitied. He was truly between "the devil and the deep sea."

Our situation was not at all suited for sober calculation. Some appeared altogether careless what would become of them — seeming to have a willingness to turn in with and live the life of a savage, some two or three were anxious to leave the wilderness and return to the States as empty as when we left them. But this was rejected by nearly all, for we still had a distant hope of having better luck.

Some of our men were acquainted with the situation of the rendezvous of a company of traders on the head waters of the Colerado,* trading under the firm of B. L. E. Bowville, & Co.† and it was proposed to start for this post

*The headwaters of Green River, and is really the source of the Colorado.

†Benjamin Louis Eulalie de Bonneville was born in France, April 14, 1796. His father, a well-educated man, and a publisher, who had actively discussed the questions of the day through his pamphlets, fell under the displeasure of the government and was imprisoned. Upon his release he sought permission to sail for America, which was refused him. He contrived however, to send Mme. Bonneville and her son Benjamin with Thomas Paine (the notorious infidel and author of the *Age of Reason*) who, likewise finding France too turbulent at this period, just prior to the outbreak of the revolution, came to America. The Bonnevilles lived for a time with Paine near New York. It was through the latter's influence that the subject of this sketch secured an appointment to West Point, where he graduated in 1819. When Lafayette visited America in 1825 he showed the Bonneville family much attention and Benjamin, then a dashing young officer of the army, was detailed to accompany him as aide on his tour through the United States. On the return of Lafayette to France he took his aide with him and the latter remained a guest of the Lafayette home for some time. On his return he was assigned to duty on the frontier, and here no doubt he became imbued with the possibilities of the fur-trade. Chittenden remarks:

"He began casting about for an opportunity to gratify this new ambition and the result was his famous expedition of 1832-5. Whether the prime mover in this enterprise was Bonneville himself, or certain business men in New York who wanted to enter the fur trade and thought the Captain a good man to conduct an expedition, does not appear. Bonneville secured a leave of absence from August, 1831, to October, 1833, with permission to spend it in the unexplored regions of the Far West. The letter from the War Department, granting this leave, states that it was 'for the purpose of carrying into execution your design of exploring the country to the Rocky mountains and beyond, with a view to ascertaining the nature and character of the several tribes inhabiting those regions; the trade which might be profitably carried on with them; the quality of the soil, the productions, the minerals, the natural history, the climate, the geography and topography, as well as the geology of the various parts of the country.' To these general purposes the Department added another — that of securing special information as to the Indian tribes, their numbers, methods of making war, their condition, equipment, alliances, etc. Captain Bonneville's expedition was to be of no expense to the United States.

"This 'design' of Captain Bonneville furnishes a clue to the argu-

immediately. After much debate and persuasion, it was agreed that we should make the attempt. We got every thing ready — the wounded having entirely recovered — and started on our long and tedious journey. As we travelled along we killed plenty of various kinds of game — met with nothing to interrupt our journey, and on the 25th of July arrived at the camp of Bowville,* which at this time consisted of 195 men, together with a small company

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ments which he presented as a basis of his application for a leave of absence. It is certain, however, that whatever may have been his representations to the Department, the primary object of his enterprise was trade. The entire record of his work, so far as it has been preserved to us, proves this. Bonneville entered into arrangements with Alfred Seton, of New York, one of the old Astorians, by which Seton and some associates were to provide the funds for a mountain expedition and Bonneville was to conduct its operations in the field. In carrying out this program the Captain organized a party of one hundred and ten men with two principal assistants, Mr. I. R. Walker, later of California renown, and Mr. M. S. Cerré, a member of a family well known in the fur trade of the West. A fine assortment of goods was provided and the equipment was in all respects a splendid one. Wagons were used on the expedition, contrary to the practice of the mountain traders generally. There were twenty of these vehicles drawn by oxen and mules. The whole organization was on the basis of strict military discipline, and to all outward appearances the enterprise promised to make a very formidable showing in the mountain trade."

He remained in the mountain trade until 1835 when he returned to the frontier to his duties. His adventures in the mountains are ably described by Washington Irving; this has given him and his travels a prominence they otherwise never would have received. His venture from a financial standpoint was a gigantic failure, and his supporters no doubt lost many thousands of dollars, nor were the scientific returns sufficient to make it any more of a success than the financial.

"Bonneville's leave of absence having long expired before his return, he had been dropped from the rolls of the army. There was a very proper opposition among army officers to his reinstatement, and he would have been excluded altogether but for President Jackson, who reinstated him as a reward for his contributions to geographical knowledge of the country. In his subsequent career Bonneville served at various posts on the frontier, at Carlisle, Pa., and in the Seminole and Mexican Wars, being wounded in the latter. He remained loyal to the Union during the Civil War although his sympathies were on the other side. He was made Brevet Brigadier General but reached no more important command than that of Benton Barracks at St. Louis where he remained most of the time during the war. After peace came he retired from the service and took up his home at Fort Smith where he had previously formed close attachments. He died at Fort Smith June 12, 1878, and was buried in Bellefontaine Cemetery, St. Louis. Bonneville was married while at Carlisle Barracks to Miss Ann Lewis. While stationed at St. Louis both his wife and daughter died. He was married again in 1870 to Miss Susan Neis of Fort Smith who survived him. He had a brother in the American Navy who gained some distinction and was lost with the American ship *Wasp*."

*Here again Leonard is not correct in his dates: Walker started for California July 24th.

belonging to Mackenzie,* from the Missouri river, of 60 men.† We were well received by these men, most of whom had been in the woods for several years, and experienced many hardships and privations, similar to what we had suffered. They seemed to sympathize with us about our loss, and all appeared anxious that we should turn in with them and restore our lost fortunes. After we had become thoroughly rested from the fatigue of our long tramp to this post, most of our men hired in different ways with this company. These men had been engaged in trapping in the vicinity of this rendezvous for a long time, & had caught nearly all the beaver, and were thinking about moving to some other section of country. There was a large tract of land laying to the South West of this, extending to the Columbia river on the North, and to the Pacific ocean and Gulph of Calafornia on the West and South, which was said to abound with beaver, and otherwise suited as a trading country. As our company was now very large, the officers concluded on dividing it into

*Of the American Fur Company, of which Kenneth MacKenzie was at the head of the Upper Missouri Department.

†The rendezvous this year (1833) on the headwaters of Green River was a scarcely less notable gathering than that of the previous year at Pierre's Hole. There were present the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, the American Fur Company, Bonneville with his company, William L. Sublette and his friend Campbell who had just arrived from St. Louis with the yearly supplies and expected to carry back the returns of the year's hunt. There was also the shrewd and irrepressible Yankee, Nathaniel J. Wyeth, and the sporting Englishman, Captain Stuart. The full name of the latter was Sir William Drummond Steuart, he was 7th Bart. of Grandtully, born in 1795, married in 1830; succeeded his brother in 1838, and died on the 28th of April, 1871.

He wrote a book in two volumes of his experiences in the Rocky Mountains, some time after his return to Scotland, which was published in 1854 by G. Walker, Madox St., London, under the title of "Edward Warren." His name nowhere appearing in the same as the author, this book is quite rare. The public library of Edinburgh, Scot., has a copy from the author with his autograph and some few corrections in his hand writing. From the information I am able to gather, this book contains nothing of historical value of this period, notwithstanding the prominence of the author. He makes the following unique statement in the preface of the book: "The record of which is now a sad tho' pleasing memory, from the change which has directed the tide of emigration, across the chain of the Northern Andes. I shall endeavor to prevent these pages falling into the hands of any but such as may be ready to accept every apology I can offer for intruding them upon their notice."

three divisions. Accordingly Capt. Bowville was left here with a considerable force to watch the movements of the Indians, and to do what he could at trapping, as this had been a great harbor for beaver, it was thought that there might be still some more to be caught. A Mr. Cerren,* with a few men was sent back to St. Lewis, with 4000 lbs. of beaver fur, with instructions to return and meet Capt. Bowville at the Great Salt Lake in the following summer, with a supply of provisions to do the company, for the two following years. The other division, under the command of a Mr. Walker,† was ordered to steer

*Michel Sylvestre Cerré was born at St. Louis April 17, 1803. He was the son of Pascal Leon and Therese (Lami) Cerré. Michel or Lami Cerré as he was generally called, followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, who was a pioneer fur-trader in the Mississippi Valley, and led a life of adventure until he had reached middle age.

In his early youth he made one or more journeys from St. Louis to Santa Fé. Later he engaged in the fur-trade, and together with his brother and Pierre D. Papin, his sister's husband, had a trading-post on the Missouri River in what is now South Dakota. This business was sold, in the latter part of the year 1830, to the American Fur Company and the partners entered the employment of that company.

In 1832, Cerré engaged with Bonneville as one of his captains, and in that service made two or three trips from St. Louis to the mountains and back.

In 1839, he married Helene Lebean of St. Louis, being a kinsman of the Chouteaus; he probably re-entered the service of the fur company soon after he severed his connection with Bonneville, and the St. Louis Directory, which was in those days an occasional publication only, shows that he was connected with the home office of that company (American Fur Company) in 1845.

In 1848, he represented St. Louis in the lower house of the Missouri Legislature, of the four Whig candidates for the position he was the only one elected.

In May, 1849, he was elected clerk of the St. Louis Circuit Court, which office he held until the end of the year 1853. In August, 1858, he was elected sheriff of St. Louis County. The Whig party had then ceased to exist, and Cerré, like most of the Missouri creoles, had gone over to the Democratic party. He died of pneumonia January 5, 1860. He left three children, one son and two daughters, all of whom are still living.

Chittenden gives the following description of the above mentioned post: "*Teton Post* is a name which may be used to designate a post belonging to the firm of P. D. Papin & Co., which Maximilian calls the French Fur Company. The members of the company were Papin, the Cerré brothers and Honore Picotte. The post was probably built about 1828 or 1829. It stood just below the mouth of the Teton. The firm sold out to the American Fur Company and entered its service October 14, 1830, and the property was at once moved up to Fort Tecumseh."

†There is some confusion among authorities as to this man's name. Bonneville, through Irving, gives his name as I. R. Walker, as does also Chittenden; in Bancroft his name is given as Joseph or Joe. Dr. L. H. Bunnell, who wrote a history of the Yosemite, and who knew

MICHEL SYLVESTRE CERRÉ

[Kindly furnished by Judge W. B. Douglas of St. Louis.]

through an unknown country, towards the Pacific, and if he did not find beaver, he should return to the Great S. L. in the following summer. Mr. Walker was a man well calculated to undertake a business of this kind. He was well hardened to the hardships of the wilderness — understood the character of the Indians very well — was kind and affable to his men, but at the same time at liberty to command without giving offence, — and to explore unknown regions was his chief delight.* I was anxious to go to the coast of the Pacific, and for that purpose hired with Mr. Walker as clerk, for a certain sum per year.** The 20th of Aug.† was fixed as the day for each company to take its departure. When the day arrived every thing was in readiness, — each man provided with four horses,‡ and

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him well in later years, gives his name as Captain Joseph Reddeford Walker, which is no doubt correct.

Walker, Joseph Reddeford, guide, born in Knoxville, Tenn., in 1798, died at Ignacio Valley, Contra Costa Co., Cal., Oct. 27, 1876. He removed to Jackson County, Mo., in 1818, began his career as a guide on the frontier in 1822, served in that capacity in Captain Bonneville's expedition to the Rocky Mountains in 1832, conducted a party from Great Salt Lake to California in 1833 when he discovered the Yosemite Lake and Valley and the river that bears his name, found Walker's Pass in 1834, and made many subsequent trips across the plains. He resided in Contra Costa County, California, during his later life.— *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, vol. vi, p. 328.

*This is the celebrated Walker California expedition, of which so much has been written and so little known. It has been a mark for a number of prominent writers, probably on account of Bonneville's uncomplimentary remarks as to it, in addition to Irving's caustic comments; one is led to suppose that the cruelties practiced by Walker and his men were such as to be too revolting to appear in print. There does not seem to be any inclination on the part of Leonard to hide or shirk the responsibility for the murder of the natives, and the simple and direct manner in which he tells his story, carries conviction as to its truth, so that we are inclined to think he there gives events as he saw them, and makes this account by far the best and most reliable we have of it. It was written shortly after his return, when events were still fresh in his memory. Most of these men had suffered hardships at the hands of the Indians, of which Leonard is an example, that was not conducive of the best feeling toward any of them.

**Nidever joined Walker's party also.

†Should be July 24th.

‡There has been much controversy as to the object of this expedition; the following, from Irving's *Bonneville*, would lead one to suppose that it was solely for the purpose of exploring the Great Salt Lake. "It was on the 24th of July, in the preceding year (1833), that the brigade of forty men set out from the Green River Valley,

an equal share of blankets, buffaloe robes, provisions, and every article necessary for the comfort of men engaged in an expedition of this kind. As we travelled along each man appeared in better spirits, and more lively than on any other similar occasion, — and I sometimes thought that we were now on an expedition from which we would realize some profit. On the fourth day of our journey we arrived at the huts of some Bawnack Indians. These Indians appear to live very poor and in the most forlorn condition. They generally make but one visit to the buffaloe country during the year, where they remain until they jirk as much meat as their females can lug home on their backs. They then quit the mountains and return to the plains, where they subsist on fish and small game the remainder of the year. They keep no horses, & are always an easy prey for other Indians provided with guns and horses. On telling these Indians the route we intended to take, they told us we must provide ourselves with meat enough to subsist upon for many days — which

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to explore the Great Salt Lake. They were to make the complete circuit of it, trapping on all the streams which should fall in their way, and to keep journals and make charts, calculated to impart a knowledge of the lake and the surounding country. All the resources of Captain Bonneville had been tasked to fit out this favorite expedition." It scarcely seems reasonable to think that, had Walker been ordered by Bonneville to explore the Great Salt Lake, which was close by, he would have made the long and dangerous journey to California. Leonard does not mention the Great Salt Lake in this connection, but makes it perfectly plain that the primary object of the expedition was to go to the Pacific. "Mr. Walker was ordered to steer through an unknown country towards the Pacific." Leonard was the clerk to Walker, and engaging with a view of visiting California, his official position should have given him knowledge of the company's affairs, in this respect. It must also be remembered that this statement of Leonard's is the first to appear in the public prints, long before Irving's *Bonneville* was written. In support of the above statement of Leonard's we have that of Nidever and Joe Meek.

"George Nidever, who was of Walker's company, and at the rendezvous while preparations were made, says nothing of such purpose [exploring the Great Salt Lake], and it was probably not thought of by Bonneville until afterwards. Nidever had suffered severely from the cold during the previous winter, and had come to Green River rendezvous that season for the express purpose of joining some party for California or of forming such a party himself, having been informed that the climate there was milder than in the mountains where he had been. (Bancroft's *History of Utah.*) When Meek and his companions fell in with Joe Walker's company on Bear

we found to be very good advice. We now set to work laying in a stock of provision, and in a few days each man was provided with about 60 pounds of substantial meat, which was packed upon our horses, and we set sail in good cheer.

On the 4th* of September we killed our last buffaloe on the West side of the Salt Lake. We still continued along the margin of the Lake, with the intention of leaving it when we got to the extreme west side of it. About the 12th we found the country very poor, and almost without game, except goats and some few rabbits. On the 13th we left the Lake and took a westerly course into the most extensive & barren plains I ever seen. This day we came to a spring, where we found some Indians encamped, who were on their way up to the buffaloe country, to lay in their winters supply of meat. These Indians appear to be more wealthy, and exercise more ingenuity in providing for themselves than those we had met with a few days ago. They have paths beat from

River, they resolved to accompany the expedition; for it was, 'a feather in a man's cap,' and made his services doubly valuable to have become acquainted with a new country, and fitted himself for a pilot." They were here on the verge of Salt Lake and yet made no attempt to explore it, but they did make preparations here, by preparing meat, to cross the Salt Lake desert to the headwaters of Mary's River, the most direct route to California. The whole Salt Lake exploring expedition was no doubt an afterthought of Bonneville's, as stated by many authorities. He was at this time not even paying expenses in the trade, and being afraid that his backers would grow tired of supporting a losing venture, he had to have some plausible explanation for his failure, and therefore endeavored to use this as an excuse. As a military man, one would think that had Walker disregarded his positive orders, in the way we are led to believe, Bonneville would have dismissed him from his service. Walker, according to Leonard, continued to hold the same responsible position with him until he left the mountains, but left his service on his return from this expedition, according to Irving. So far as the profits from trapping are concerned, we are inclined to think that an exploring trip around Great Salt Lake would be little more profitable than a trip to California. There was fully as much honor connected with a tour of exploration to California, over a route never before traveled, as of exploring the Great Salt Lake which had no doubt been explored a dozen times previous in the same manner as Walker would have been capable of doing—that is, simply visiting it or traveling around its shores. He then takes exception to the way in which the natives were treated, which was so repulsive to him that he turned away, not wishing to hear any more. This we shall take up later.

*This date should be August 4th.

one spring or hole of water to another, and by observing these paths, they told us, we would be enabled to find water without much trouble. The chief of this tribe, further told us, that after travelling so many days South-west, (the course we were now about to take,) we would come to a high mountain which was covered with snow at the top the whole year round, and on each side of which we would find a large river to head, and descend into the sandy plains below, forming innumerable small lakes, and sinks into the earth and disappears. Some distance further down these plains, he said, we would come to another mountain, much larger than the first, which he had never been across. In all this space, he said, there was no game; but that near this latter mountain we would come across a tribe of poor Indians, whom he supposed would not be friendly.

On the next morning we left these Indians, and pursued our course North-west. Our men, who were in such fine spirits when we left the rendezvous, began to show symptoms of fatigue, & were no longer so full of sport. We travelled along these paths according to the directions of the Indians, now and then meeting with a few straggling natives, who were in a manner naked, on the trail of the main body to the buffaloe country. — Some of these straggling Indians showed us some lumps of salt, which was the most white, clear and beautiful I ever seen.

On the 30th we arrived at a considerable hill, which, in appearance, is similar to a smooth rock, — where we encamped for the night, and let our horses loose to graze — which we thought might now be done with safety, as we were no longer beset by the murderous Rickarees. While laying about resting ourselves, some of the men observed the horses very eagerly licking the stones which

lay on the surface of the ground, near the spring. This circumstance caused the men to examine the stones, which we found to be salt, and had been carried here from the hill by the Indians. Their surface was covered with moss or rust, but on breaking them, or rubbing off the rust, the salt is seen in its purity. This hill runs North and South, and is from one to three miles across, and produces no kind of vegetation, whatever except a little grass which grows in holes or gutters around its base, formed by water descending from the hill during the rainy season. This country appeared the most like a desert of any I had yet seen. It is so dry and sandy that there is scarcely any vegetation to be found — not even a spear of grass, except around the springs. The water in some of these springs, too, is so salt that it is impossible to drink it. The Indians say that it never rains, only in the spring of the year. Every thing here seems to declare that, here man shall not dwell.*

*This hill was seen in 1824, by a Mr. Smith,† who extended his explorations to the Pacific coast, and was there taken prisoner by the Spaniards. See his travels.‡ [Note in orig.]

†Jedediah S. Smith is here referred to, but we do not know that he was in this locality in 1824; his California explorations did not begin until 1826. He was probably at this point in June, 1827, when on his return from California with two companions, to the rendezvous near the Great Salt Lake.

‡This is Jedediah S. Smith. It is to be regretted that there were no more men of his character in the early fur-trade. Chittenden says, "He was one of the most remarkable men that ever engaged in the American Fur Trade. He was like that distinguished character of later years, Stonewall Jackson, in combining with the most ardent belief in, and practice of, the Christian religion, an undaunted courage, fierce and impetuous nature, and untiring energy. His deeds are unfortunately much veiled in obscurity, but enough has survived to show that he was a true knight errant, a lover of that kind of adventure which the unexplored West afforded in such ample degree.

"Smith was born in the State of New York, of respectable parentage, was well educated, and at about eighteen years of age went to St. Louis, where he entered the service of Ashley and Henry in 1823. It is a singular coincidence that Smith, Jackson, and Sublette were all in this expedition. They greatly distinguished themselves in the battle with the Aricaras, June 2, 1823." They were later associated as partners succeeding the firm by whom they were at this time employed. "After Ashley's retreat, and while he was waiting for the military to come to his relief, it became important to communicate with Henry on the Yellowstone. It was an extremely haz-

After travelling a few days longer thro' these barren plains; we came to the mountain described by the Indian

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ardous errand, and Ashley called for volunteers. To the astonishment of every one, young Smith, a mere youth, stepped forward and offered to go. Ashley was greatly impressed with the young man's intrepidity. He accepted the offer, but prevailed upon an experienced Canadian Frenchman to go with him." They made their way through successfully, although they had a number of narrow escapes. Fortunately Henry had returned to the mouth of the Yellowstone after his own defeat by the Blackfeet. Smith and Henry with all but twenty men, who were left in the fort at the mouth of the Yellowstone, descended the river and joined Ashley near the mouth of the Cheyenne about July 2. Smith was now sent on to St. Louis with the proceeds of Henry's hunt. He reached this point in safety and here met General Atkinson who was in command of the troops west of the Mississippi; he at once hastened back to his employer.

United States troops were now sent up the river under Colonel Leavenworth, to punish the hostile Aricaras, and in order to assist the military general, Ashley organized his trappers into a company. Smith, who was only a youth, was appointed captain, which shows the esteem and confidence in which he was held; it may have been a reward for his daring trip to find Henry on the Yellowstone.

His career in the West was full of the most daring adventures, and carried him over almost the whole of it, from the British possessions on the north to the Mexican province on the south, and from the Mississippi to the Pacific. He was twice in California, and always referred to that country as the most beautiful on the globe. To him no doubt belongs the honor of being the first to cross the continent between the Lewis and Clark route on the north and that followed by the Spaniards on the south. His route was but a short distance south of the present line of the Union Pacific Railroad, over an unknown desert. He had in preparation, according to Waldo, an atlas of the western country, but his untimely death prevented its publication. On several occasions his escape from the Indians and grizzly bears, and from starvation, bordered on the miraculous.

"Smith was a bold, outspoken, professing, and consistent Christian, the first and only one known among the early Rocky Mountain trappers and hunters. No one who knew him well doubted the sincerity of his piety. He had become a communicant of the Methodist church before leaving his home in New York, and . . . . in St. Louis he never failed to occupy a place in the church of his choice, while he gave generously to all objects connected with the religion which he professed and loved." In view of the times and the character of most of his associates, as well as the questionable methods in use by many of the fur companies, and the very few who gave any thought whatever to religion, his character stands out in bold relief. We are, in fact led to believe that many who joined the fur companies were fugitives from justice, and were afraid to return to civilization on this account. This Christian gentleman carried his religion to the mountains and into his daily life; and we have no record of any act in which he failed to sustain the above character. His companions knew and respected his religious principles, notwithstanding the fact that he was only a lad compared to many of them. "Besides being an adventurer and a hero, a trader and a Christian, he was inclined to literary pursuits."

In the spring of 1824, Jedediah S. Smith set out on one of those expeditions which were so conspicuous a feature of his career, and went with a small party across the mountains to the head of the Snake River. He spent the summer and fall in that vicinity and meanwhile fell in with a small detached party of Hudson Bay trappers. From these he obtained in some way or other all their catch of beaver, one hundred skins, and then gave them the protection of his own party until they could find their leader, Alexander Ross. The latter was not much pleased with the way his men had been relieved of their fur, but he was forced to concede that the Americans were "shrewd men" and that Smith in particular was a "very intelligent

as having its peak covered with snow. It presents a most singular appearance — being entirely unconnected with

person." From this point, which was in the valley of Godin River northwest of Snake River, and on the outskirts of the great lava plain, Smith made his way north and is said to have passed the winter among the Flatheads. It is not unreasonable to suppose that, being a devout man, he would endeavor to instruct the Indians in the precepts of the Christian religion, and it is a fact that these same Indians sent a deputation of four chiefs to see General Clark at St. Louis in 1833 in order to get the "White Man's Book of Heaven," of which they had learned through some hunter or trapper. It is to be regretted we cannot trace this missionary act to our hero. He visited one or more posts of the British Company and gained the first positive information concerning operations in the Columbia valley that had been received since the Astorians left the country. Smith returned to St. Louis in the summer or autumn of 1824, and gave such information as he had gathered to General Atkinson, who considered it of so much importance that he embodied it in a report to the War Department in the following November. In this report he refers to Smith as "an intelligent young man who was employed by General Ashley beyond the Rocky Mountains."

In spite of the unfortunate beginning of the expedition of 1823 it was on the whole successful. When the detached trapping parties met in the mountains in 1824 they had collected a considerable quantity of beaver fur, which Henry took back to St. Louis. The results of the expedition were sufficiently favorable to justify his immediate return, and he left St. Louis on the 23rd of October with a new expedition to the mountains. This departure, strange to say, is the very last word which we have of Andrew Henry in the fur-trade. He evidently did not remain long in the mountains, but just when he left the fur-trade is not known but we know that Jedediah S. Smith took his place and remained Ashley's partner until 1826. It seems that Ashley was in the mountain trade for the purpose of making a fortune, with which to satisfy his political ambitions, after securing which he resolved to abandon further personal conduct of affairs there. This he could do without relinquishing his interest in the business. He had developed some of the ablest men in the fur-trade, men of the highest worth, who later figured prominently in the history of the West. If he could turn over his affairs in the mountains to them, and himself conduct the St. Louis end of the business, it would be more to his own liking, and give these young men a start in their own names. Accordingly he made propositions to the ablest and most experienced of his lieutenants, Jedediah S. Smith, David E. Jackson, and William L. Sublette, and on the 18th day of July, 1826, articles of agreement were made and signed "near the Grand Lake west of the Rocky Mountains." This instrument which is still in existence constitutes the firm of Smith, Jackson, and Sublette and is the second change of partners in the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. Smith was at this time not much over twenty-one years of age.

This great field of adventure and exploration was now open to him, and his movements would not be hampered by his superior as formerly. The Bible and rifle were his inseparable companions and the peaceful teachings of the one, never diminished in any way the vigor with which he used the other. The new West captivated his mind with its opportunities for adventure and he made the most of them from this on until his untimely death. He was now about to set out on those long and perilous expeditions which absorbed his time for the next three years. Fortunately we have his own account of the two trips he made to California.

On the 22nd of August, 1826, Smith left the rendezvous near the Great Salt Lake with a party of fifteen men for the purpose of exploring the country to the southwest, then wholly unknown to the American trader. His route lay by Utah Lake, thence across the Sevier valley to the Virgin River, which he descended to the Colorado. Nothing of importance occurred on this part of his route except the discovery of a remarkable salt cave on the Virgin River

any other chain. It is surrounded on either side by level plains, and rises abruptly to a great heighth, rugged, and

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two days' journey above its mouth. Smith crossed to the east bank of the Colorado and followed down the stream until he came upon the Mojave Indians with whom he remained fifteen days to recruit his stock of horses. Recrossing the Colorado at the end of this time he pursued a westerly course, with great hardship and suffering, across the barren and desolate wastes of Southern California, and about the middle of October arrived at San Diego. In California his principal difficulties were with the Spanish authorities, who viewed his presence there with suspicion as they did all foreigners and particularly Americans; they hampered his movements by their arbitrary requirements. Through the interposition of Captain W. H. Cunningham of the *Courier*, of Boston, he obtained permission to purchase the supplies he needed and also to return by the route he had come. We must say to the credit of these early sea-captains that almost every traveler who crossed the mountains to the coast in those early days, received more or less assistance from them, and there was one or more of these Boston ships constantly trading up and down this coast. Smith was not disposed to leave at once a country which he had come so far to see, and moving back from the coast he turned northwest and traveled some three hundred miles parallel with the coast, and at a distance from it which he estimated at one hundred and fifty miles. He spent a good part of the winter on this journey and turned it to advantage in trapping. Spring found him in the vicinity of the headwaters of the San Joaquin and Merced rivers. Early in May he attempted to take his party across Mount Joseph, as he called the high range of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, in order to return to the summer rendezvous of 1827, near Salt Lake, but the deep snow baffled his efforts. He then decided to leave most of his men in California, while he would make the journey to the rendezvous and return for them in the fall. With two men, seven horses, and two mules laden with provision and forage, he set out on this perilous journey May 20, 1827. In eight days he succeeded in crossing the mountains. He must have passed through or near the Yosemite Valley, and, in the region of the great redwood trees, he lost in crossing two horses and one mule, the deep snow not being hard enough to sustain the weight of the animals. Twenty days more took him to the southwestern extremity of Great Salt Lake along the western shore of which he then bent his course. He reached the rendezvous about the middle of June. The sufferings of the party in crossing the Salt Lake desert were terrible, and but two of the animals survived the journey. There is no clue given in Smith's account as to the route he followed, but it is certainly far south of the Humboldt, and the Union Pacific railroad. He probably crossed the range near Sonora Pass, going north of Mono Lake and south of Walker Lake. He saw neither of these lakes, but observed a stream flowing towards the north which in all probability was Walker River. Immediately after the rendezvous, without loss of time, he set out, July 13, with a small party of eighteen men to return to California and bring back the men he had left there. He followed the route of the previous year and went direct to the Mojave Indians. Unfortunately, since his previous visit, the jealous Spaniard had been there and had warned the Mojaves not to permit any more Americans to pass that way. Smith was ignorant of this, and, counting on their former friendly disposition, was somewhat off his guard. Upon his departure from the village, and while in the act of crossing the river on a raft, the Indians fell upon the party, killing ten men and capturing all the property and papers. This occurred in the month of August. He now made his way with great suffering and peril to the Spanish settlements, which he reached at San Gabriel in nine and one-half days. Here he left two wounded men, and himself started north to join his party. Two Indian guides whom Smith had secured to conduct him into Southern California were seized by the authorities. One died under harsh treatment, and the other was sentenced to death. One of the wounded men, Thomas Virgin, who had been left at San

hard to ascend. To take a view of the surrounding country from this mountain, the eye meets with nothing

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Gabriel, was taken to San Diego and thrown into prison, but was finally released and sent to join Smith. Upon arriving at the San José mission, our hero sought permission to visit the governor at Monterey, but the request was denied, and he in turn was thrown in prison, but was shortly after sent under guard to Monterey, where he encountered almost hopeless difficulties with the equivocating governor. Finally, sometime in November, through the intercession of the master of an American vessel, he was given permission to depart, after purchasing necessary supplies, and was enjoined that he must leave Mexican territory. The authorities refused to let Smith augment his party, although there were several Englishmen and Americans, no doubt renegades and adventurers, on the coast, who wished to join his party. He left with a party of twenty men, two of whom soon deserted. Two months was the period fixed within which he must depart from Spanish territory, and the general route which he must follow was designated by the authorities. It so happened that this route would take him across the Buenaventura (Sacramento) River, which was then impassable from high water. Smith accordingly took the matter into his own hands, and resolved to pass the winter in that neighborhood. He followed slowly up the course of the river to its principal fork, where he passed several months. From this circumstance the stream came to be known as the American Fork. On the 13th of April, 1828, he set out in a northwest direction. After reaching the coast he turned north and kept on without noteworthy incident until he reached the Umpquah River, in the neighborhood of which were the Rogue River Indians, and probably the most treacherous on the coast of which Smith knew nothing. His party trapped very successfully on the way, and had by this time secured a large quantity of fur. On the 14th of July Smith left the party in camp and went out alone to search for a road. On his way back he was fired upon by some Indians, and although he escaped it was only to find his camp and all his property in the hands of the Indians. Fifteen of his men were killed, and only three, including a Mr. Black, escaped. The survivors fled north with all possible haste, leaving their leader entirely alone. He made his way in utter destitution to Fort Vancouver on the Columbia, where he found his companions. The Hudson Bay Company authorities received him with every consideration of generosity, and even sent a force under Thomas McKay to punish the Indians and recover his property, who succeeded in recovering almost everything that was lost. Bancroft relates the circumstances under which Smith arrived at Fort Vancouver, and the prompt action taken by Dr. McLaughlin, chief factor then in charge, to aid him. Thomas McKay was a son of the Mr. McKay who was lost on the ill-fated "Tonquin," of Astorian fame; his widow, a native, afterwards married Dr. McLaughlin.

The Hudson Bay Company through Dr. McLaughlin purchased Smith's furs amounting to about $20,000 worth, at the market price, giving him a draft on London in payment. Smith remained at Vancouver until March 12, 1829, when he set out for the east to rejoin his partners.

It is with pleasure we note the meeting of two such interesting and remarkable characters as McLaughlin and Smith in the fur-trade. Here was truly the chivalry of the trade. Dr. McLaughlin was no doubt very favorably impressed not only with the great energy displayed by young Smith in the collection of furs, but by his reaching out and exploring new fields, the great amount of territory traversed by him, as well as his uprightness, and the Christian principles which were a guide to his daily life, all combined in a young man of twenty-four. This no doubt appealed to the just and upright Hudson Bay officer.

If any man is entitled to the honor of being the path-finder of the West, that man is Jedediah S. Smith. He ascended the Columbia, and followed the British fur-traders' route to their post among the Flatheads, which he had visited in 1824. Thence he and his man Black

but a smooth, sandy, level plain. On the whole, this mountain may be set down as one of the most remarkable

started south for Snake River. On his way he met Jackson, who was looking for him, and a little later found Sublette, "on the 5th of August, 1829, at the Tetons on Henry Fork, a tributary of the south branch of the Columbia."

Such is the simple statement as given by Smith himself of his three years' explorations. Much has been written about them, mostly imaginary and many are the reputed heroic exploits connected with them. That the expeditions were full of romantic interest and thrilling adventure cannot be doubted; nor that the little parties, and particularly their leader, endured great hardship and privations.

In spite of Smith's rough experience and his several disasters, his work had nevertheless been fairly successful. The humane and generous action of Dr. McLaughlin had saved him the results of his arduous labors where the code of competition might properly have deprived him of it, and, if he did not bring to his associates a goodly lot of furs, he had in his pocket securities which were even better. Smith's Christian nature would not permit the benevolent McLaughlin to outdo him in generosity, and he insisted that the fall hunt of himself and associates should be made east of the Continental Divide, so as not to trespass upon the territory which the Hudson Bay Company claimed as belonging commercially to them, to which the other partners reluctantly consented.

About the 1st of April, 1830, we find Smith in the Powder River country about to set out for the spring hunt, with young Jim Bridger as guide. They went by way of the Yellowstone to the Upper Missouri. Smith went as far as the Judith Basin, made a successful hunt, and returned to the rendezvous on Wind River without any unusual occurrence or mishap.

The business of the rendezvous was this year particularly important. Smith, Jackson, and Sublette, following the example of Ashley four years before, relinquished their trade and sold out to younger men, who had now become distinguished by their ability and experience. These were Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton G. Sublette, Henry Fraeb, Jean Baptiste Gervais, and James Bridger, and the new firm was called the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. The transfer of the business from the old to the new firm took place August 4, 1830. Smith, Jackson, and Sublette started the same day for St. Louis with one hundred and ninety packs of beaver. They arrived October 10th, bringing back the ten wagons, four of the cattle, and the milch cow, which had been taken to the mountains in the spring. In the following year these three individuals embarked in the Santa Fé trade, and it was on the first trip in which this Christian hero of the wilderness met an untimely death, at the early age of about twenty-six years, on the banks of the thirsty Cimarron. With a large and costly expedition of some twenty wagons and eighty men, said to have been the finest outfit ever sent to Santa Fé, these veteran traders set out, never doubting that their long experience would enable them to cope with the dangers of the route. Everything went well until the ford of the Arkansas was reached; thus far the trail was perfectly well marked with wagon tracks. But it was very different on the desert waste between the Arkansas and the Cimarron. There was not a person with them who had been over the route before, and they now found themselves in a featureless country with no track of any kind except buffalo trails which crossed each other in the most confusing directions. The alluring mirage deceived and exasperated the men, and after two days of fruitless wanderings, with animals dying and men frantic for water, the condition of things seemed well nigh desperate. In this emergency Smith declared that he would find water or perish in the attempt. He was a bold and fearless man and unhesitatingly sallied forth alone for the salvation of the caravan. Following a buffalo trail for several miles he came upon the valley of the Cimarron, but only to find it destitute of water. He knew enough of the character of these streams, however, to believe there was water near the surface, and he accordingly scooped out a little hollow

phenomenas of nature. Its top is covered with the pinone tree,* bearing a kind of must, which the natives are very fond of, and which they collect for winter provision. This hill is nearly round, and looks like a hill or mound, such as may be met with in the prairies on the east side of the mountain.

Not far from our encampment we found the source of the river mentioned by the Indian.† After we all got tired gazing at this mountain and the adjacent curiosities, we left it and followed down the river, in order to find water and grass for our horses. On this stream we found old signs of beaver, and we supposed that, as game was scarce in this country, the Indians had caught them for provision. The natives which we occasionally met with, still continued to be of the most poor and dejected kind — being entirely naked and very filthy. We came to the hut of one of these Indians who happened to have a considerable quantity of fur collected. — At this hut we obtained a large robe composed of beaver skins fastened together, in exchange for two awls and one fish hook. This robe was worth from 30 to 40 dollars. We continued travelling down this river, now and then catching a few beaver. But, as we continued to extend our acquaintance with the natives, they began to practice their national failing of steal-

into which indeed, the water began to collect. Meanwhile some stealthy Comanches, whom Smith had evidently not observed, were stealing upon him, and while he was in the act of stooping down to drink mortally wounded him with several arrows. He rose and displayed his undaunted spirit in resisting his savage foes to the last, and killed two of them before he expired. The spot where he fell was never precisely known and no grave protects the earthly remains of this Christian and knightly adventurer. What a truly noble example of young manhood, ambitious without ostentation, honest and upright from principle, a true disciple of Christ, he sought out the most secret haunts of the red men, not so much for the value of the beaver pelt, as to surmount obstacles and achieve success. His life like many others, was a sacrifice which was necessary for the redemption of the Great West, which he loved so dearly. A sadder fate or a more heroic victim the parched wastes of the desert never knew.

*Pinon.

†The headwaters of the Humboldt or Mary's River.

ing. So eager were they to possess themselves of our traps, that we were forced to quit trapping in this vicinity and make for some other quarter. The great annoyance we sustained in this respect greatly displeased some of our men, and they were for taking vengeance before we left the country — but this was not the disposition of Captain Walker. These discontents being out hunting one day, fell in with a few Indians, two or three of whom they killed, and then returned to camp, not daring to let the Captain know it. The next day while hunting, they repeated the same violation — but this time not quite so successful, for the Captain found it out, and immediately took measures for its effectual suppression.*

*The reason for killing the natives was simply because they stole the traps, which were worth from fifteen to twenty dollars apiece, and forced the trappers to suspend operations. These traps were the property of the trappers and were considered quite valuable. Nidever says (Bancroft, *Hist. Nevada*, p. 43), "The natives were increasingly bold and hostile from the first, stealing all they could lay their hands on, and attempting to shoot Frazier while setting his traps. It was necessary to give up trapping almost entirely, and only by the greatest precautions did the company escape annihilation. Finally they turned aside from their trail just in time to avoid an ambush, and were attacked by some hundreds of savages, of whom 33 were killed."

In Mrs. Victor's *River of the West* Meek, who however exaggerates everything, stating that Walker had one hundred and eighteen men, admits that the attack in which seventy-five Indians fell, was unprovoked, except by the thefts and constantly increasing numbers of the Indians; but he defends the act as a necessity, though it did not seem so to Bonneville, who was not an experienced Indian fighter. Stephen H. L. Meek a member of the company whose account is given elsewhere states that on September 9th they were surrounded and attacked by a large body of natives with the loss of five men wounded, and one — William Small — killed, the natives being repulsed with a loss of twenty-seven killed. September 16th the hunters attacked one hundred and fifty natives, seated and smoking, killed eighteen, and took five captives, who were beaten and released. We can scarcely confirm this in Leonard.

The killing of these Indians in this manner was a dastardly act which cannot be too strongly condemned and for which there was no good and sufficient reason. Leonard makes it quite clear that it was done without the knowledge or sanction of Captain Walker and the greater part of his men, and the moment the affair came to his knowledge he promptly took measures for its "effectual suppression." As we follow this narrative we will see how uncalled-for is the following expression of Irving, and how unjust it is to some of the company. "Two of the Mexican party just mentioned joined the band of trappers, and proved themselves worthy companions. In the course of their journey through the country frequented by the poor Root Diggers, there seems to have been an emulation between them, which could inflict the greatest outrages upon the natives. The trappers still considered them in the light of dangerous foes; and the Mexicans very probably, charged them with the sin of horse-stealing; we have no other mode of accounting for the infamous barbarities of which,

At this place, all the branches of this stream is collected from the mountain into the main channel, which forms quite a large stream; and to which we gave the name of Barren River* — a name which we thought would be quite appropriate, as the country, natives and every thing belonging to it, justly deserves the name. — You may travel for many days on the banks of this river, without finding a stick large enough to make a walking cane. — While we were on its margin, we were compelled to do without fire, unless we chanced to come across some drift that had collected together on the beach. As we proceeded down the river we found that the trails of the

according to their own story, they were guilty; hunting the poor Indians like wild beasts, and killing them without mercy. The Mexicans excelled at this savage sport; chasing their unfortunate victims at full speed; noosing them around the neck with their lassos, and then dragging them to death. Such are the scanty details of this disgraceful expedition; at least, such are all that Captain Bonneville had the patience to collect; for he was so deeply grieved by the failure of his plans, and so indignant at the atrocities related to him, that he turned, with disgust and horror, from the narrators. Had he exerted a little of the Lynch Law of the wilderness, and hanged those dexterous horsemen in their own lassos, it would but have been a well-merited and salutary act of retributive justice. The failure of this expedition was a blow to his pride, and a still greater blow to his purse. The Great Salt Lake still remained unexplored; at the same time, the means which had been furnished so liberally to fit out this favorite expedition, had all been squandered at Monterey; and the peltries, also, which had been collected on the way. He would have but scanty returns, therefore, to make this year, to his associates in the United States; and there was great danger of their becoming disheartened, and abandoning the enterprise."

Irving seems to lose sight of the fact that the two Mexicans were not with the outgoing expedition when most of the killing occurred, nor does Leonard mention any of these outrages, nor any other authority so far as we know. Bancroft shakes the bloody shirt in the following (*Hist. of Nevada*, p. 43): "During this march there were many dastardly deeds committed which Mr. Nidever fails to remember, such as shooting down the unoffending of either sex or any age, and that without provocation."

We can only say that Leonard's memory is as much at fault as Nidever's as regards the above; as his narrative was written just after his return, while the events were still fresh in his memory, we are inclined to think that many of the events above spoken of are embellishments.

*The Humboldt River. It is sometimes called Ogden River, after Peter Skene Ogden, a leading Hudson Bay Company trader, after whom Ogden (Utah) and Ogden's Hole were named; sometimes called Mary's River in honor of Ogden's Indian wife whose name was Mary. Ogden was the son of Judge Ogden of Montreal, and when a boy was full of pranks. It is told of him that when at home he would occasionally write to all the midwives in the city telling them that their services would be needed at Judge Ogden's at a certain time, when his mother would be put to the necessity of making some very embarrassing explanations when they called.

Indians began to look as if their numbers were increasing, ever since our men had killed some of their brethren. The further we descended the river, the more promising the country began to appear, although it still retained its dry, sandy nature. We had now arrived within view of a cluster of hills or mounds, which presented the appearance, from a distance, of a number of beautiful cities built up together. Here we had the pleasure of seeing t[i]mber, which grew in very sparing quantities some places along the river beach.

On the 4th of September* we arrived at some lakes, formed by this river, which we supposed to be those mentioned by the Indian chief whom we met at the Great Salt Lake. Here the country is low and swampy, producing an abundance of very fine grass — which was very acceptable to our horses, as it was the first good grazing they had been in for a long time — and here, on the borders of one of these lakes, we encamped, for the purpose of spending the night, and letting our horses have their satisfaction. A little before sun-set, on taking a view of the surrounding waste with a spy-glass, we discovered smoke issuing from the high grass in every direction. This was sufficient to convince us that we were in the midst of a large body of Indians; but as we could see no timber to go to, we concluded that it would be as well to remain in our present situation, and defend ourselves as well as we could. We readily guessed that these Indians were in arms to revenge the death of those which our men had killed up the river; & if they could succeed in getting any advantage over us,

*Leonard's dates are completely confused; he mentions before this that the last buffalo was killed on the 4th of September just west of Salt Lake; here he says that they are at the lakes along the Barren River on the 4th of September after traveling a month; and later he mentions that the last buffalo was killed on the 4th of August, which is probably correct and corresponds to the time they left Green River rendezvous.

we had no expectation that they would give us any quarter. Our first care, therefore, was to secure our horses, which we did by fastening them all together, and then hitching them to pickets drove into the ground. This done, we commenced constructing something for our own safety. The lake was immediately in our rear, and piling up all our baggage in front, we had quite a substantial breast work — which would have been as impregnable to the Indians arrow, as were the cotton-bags to the British bullets at New Orleans in 1815. Before we had got every thing completed, however, the Indians issued from their hiding places in the grass, to the number, as near as I could guess, of 8 or 900, and marched straight towards us, dancing and singing in the greatest glee. When within about 150 yards of us, they all sat down on the ground, and despatched five of their chiefs to our camp to inquire whether their people might come in and smoke with us. This request Capt. Walker very prudently refused, as they evidently had no good intentions, but told them that he was willing to meet them half way between our breast work, and where their people were then sitting. This appeared to displease them very much, and they went back not the least bit pleased with the reception they had met with.

After the five deputies related the result of their visit to their constituents, a part of them rose up and signed to us,* (which was the only mode of communication with them) that they were coming to our camp. At this 10 or 12 of our men mounted the breast work and made signs to them that if they advanced a step further it was at the peril of their lives. They wanted to know in what way we would do it. Our guns were exhibited as the weapons of

*They probably used the sign language with which all Indians are familiar.

death. This they seemed to discredit and only laughed at us. They then wanted to see what effect our guns would have on some ducks that were then swimming in the lake, not far from the shore. We then fired at the ducks — thinking by this means to strike terrour into the savages and drive them away. The ducks were killed, which astonished the Indians a good deal, though not so much as the noise of the guns — which caused them to fall flat to the ground. After this they put up a beaver skin on a bank for us to shoot at for their gratification — when they left us for the night. This night we stationed a strong guard, but no Indians made their appearance, and were permitted to pass the night in pleasant dreams.*

Early in the morning we resumed our journey along the lakes, without seeing any signs of the Indians until after sunrise, when we discovered them issuing from the high grass in front, rear, and on either side of us. This created great alarm among our men, at first, as we thought they had surrounded us on purpose, but it appeared that we had only *happened* amongst them, and they were as much frightened as us. From this we turned our course from the border of the lake into the plain. We had not travelled far until the Indians began to move after us — first in small numbers, but presently in large companies. — They did not approach near until we had travelled in this way for several hours, when they began to send small parties in advance, who would solicit us most earnestly to stop and smoke with them. After they had repeated this several times, we began to understand their motive — which was to detain us in order to let their whole force

*It is here made perfectly plain that Captain Walker used his utmost endeavors to prevent a collision, and there is no question as to his wisdom in not allowing them to come to his camp, a bow and arrow in the hands of a skillful Indian, at close quarters, is a far more formidable weapon than a muzzle-loading rifle.

come up and surround us, or to get into close quarters with us, when their bows and arrows would be as fatal and more effective then our firearms. We now began to be a little stern with them, and gave them to understand, that if they continued to trouble us, they would do it at their own risk. In this manner we were teased until a party of 80 or 100 came forward, who appeared more saucy and bold than any others. This greatly excited Capt. Walker,* who

*Captain Walker was a man of great experience in the mountains and well qualified to conduct an expedition of this character; he knew the Indians perfectly from years of association with them, and no doubt felt perfectly justified in pursuing the course he did; and unquestionably he had a great deal of justice on his side. There is not an act in this narrative of Leonard's that is not to his credit; and, according to Leonard, he remained after his return one of Bonneville's most trusted lieutenants, until the latter left the trade and mountains. He is described by Irving as being a native of Tennessee, a man about six feet tall, strong built, dark complexioned, brave in spirit, though *mild in manners*. He had resided for many years in Missouri, on the frontier; had been among the earliest adventurers to Santa Fé, where he went to trap beaver, and was taken by the Spaniards. Being liberated, he engaged with the Spaniards and Sioux Indians in the war against the Pawnees; then returned to Missouri, and here acted by turns as sheriff, trader, trapper, until he was enlisted as a leader by Captain Bonneville.

We shall see in this narrative what a very flattering offer was made him by the governor of California to bring out a colony and settle in that country. It appears that he did settle there later, and was guide for Fremont in some of his mountain expeditions. He desired that after his death the epitaph to be placed on his tomb should be that he was the discoverer of the Yosemite wonderland. From some statements in Leonard we are inclined to think his claim has some foundation in fact.

In Bancroft the following history of Walker appears: "Walker (Joseph Reddeford), native of Tennessee, who went to Missouri in 1819, where he served as sheriff and became one of the most skillful and famous of the guides, mountaineers, Indian fighters, and trappers of the Far West. His first visit to California was as commander of a party of Bonneville's trappers spending the winter of 1833 and 1834 at Monterey. Walker's Lake, River, and Pass were named for his discoveries on this trip. In 1841, unless there is an error in archive records, he came to Los Angeles, probably from New Mexico, to buy horses. In 1843 he guided a division of Chiles' emigrating party by a southern route to California, going back in 1844. His next visit was in 1845-46 as guide to Fremont's party, a portion of which he brought through his original Walker's Pass. In July, 1846, he was met by Bryant at Fort Bridger on his return from California. Captain Walker continued his wanderings, with intervals of ranchero life and stock-trading experiences in California for twenty years, making extensive explorations in Arizona, as well as in other sections, and then in 1866 or 1867 he settled in Contra Costa County, Cal., living with his nephew, James T., and dying in 1876 at the age of seventy-eight. Captain Joe Walker was one of the bravest and most skillful of mountain men; none were better acquainted than he with the geography or the native tribes of the Great Basin and he was withal less boastful and pretentious than most of his class. In his old age he was moved by the absurd praises accorded to a 'pathfinder' who had merely followed the tracks of himself and his trapper associates, to say many bitter and doubtless unjust things

was naturally of a very cool temperament, and he gave orders for the charge, saying that there was nothing equal to a good start in such a case. This was sufficient. A number of our men had never been engaged in any fighting with the Indians, and were anxious to try their skill. When our commander gave his consent to chastise these Indians, and give them an idea of our strength, 32 of us dismounted and prepared ourselves to give a severe blow. We tied our extra horses to some shrubs and left them with the main body of our company, and then selected each a choice steed, mounted and surrounded this party of Indians. We closed in on them and fired, leaving thirty-nine* dead on the field — which was nearly the half — the remainder were overwhelmed with dismay — running into the high grass in every direction, howling in the most lamentable manner.†

against Fremont, but his prejudice on this point was natural and merits but slight censure."

We have an account of him as late as 1859, in Abbot's *Kit Carson*, by Carson himself who says, "They were on the Colorado River near Fort Mohave, having guided Col. Hoffman, and a company of soldiers, who were on a surveying tour, from Fort Tejou to Fort Yuma. Carson says he was not familiar with the country lying on the Colorado River below Fort Mohave, and over this portion of the route, the celebrated scout and trapper Joe Walker was to go with us and act as guide after we passed through that portion of the country, with which I was acquainted. Joe was a tall, large man, six feet high, and weighing over two hundred pounds. We slept together in the same blanket and many a night have I laid awake, listening to his stories of fights with the Indians, and his hair-breadth escapes."

*Nidever gives the number of killed as thirty-three.

†The Jonesborough (Tenn.) *Sentinel* of March 8th contains an interesting narrative by Stephen H. L. Meek, now of that town, who has been for the last three or four years a member of a fur company. "The company last summer left Rio del Norte, July 20th, for Montras [Monterey] in California. On September 9th they were surrounded and shot at by a large party of the Banark and Snake Indians, armed with arrows. The return fire from the deadly rifles of the hunters told a dismal tale, and the Indians, astonished fell back with their rude bows and arrows, which were found powerless weapons. The mules were then repacked, and the course resumed over the interminable prairies. Five of the hunters in the skirmish were wounded, and one [William Small] was shot dead by the arrow of a chief, who soon after was brought down. The Indian loss was 27 found dead; the wounded probably twice that number. On the 16th about 150 of the same tribe hung on the company's flanks, and began to seat themselves down in rings and smoke their pipes. At this moment 30 of the mountaineers rode up to within forty steps of the savages and discharged upon them their rifles with deliberate aim. The Indians scattered like partridges from the hawk, leaving eighteen dead and five prisoners, which latter, after being severely whipped, were set at liberty. Travelled now four days across the Salt Plains, when

CAPT. JOSEPH REDDEFORD WALKER

[Kindly furnished by Judge W. B. Douglas of St. Louis.]

Capt. Walker then gave orders to some of the men to take the bows of the fallen Indians and put the wounded out of misery. The severity with which we dealt with these Indians may be revolting to the heart of the philanthropist; but the circumstances of the case altogether atones for the cruelty. It must be borne in mind, that we were far removed from the hope of any succour in case we were surrounded, and that the country we were in was swarming with hostile savages, sufficiently numerous to devour us. Our object was to strike a decisive blow. This we did — even to a greater extent than we had intended.*

they struck the California Mountain, crossing which took 15 days and in 14 days more they reached the two Laries [Tulare River] now scarce of food, and killed a horse, and subsisted on the same 11 days, came to the Spanish settlements. Here procuring provisions, they proceeded to Montras where they spent the winter agreeably in balls and parties given by the Spanish ladies. On April 1st left and in ten days struck the snow banks on the south side of the Salt or California mountains. The company now had 100 horses, 80 mules, and 25 head of cattle. Before reaching the plains on the north side of the mountains, they had to leave 30 horses, 9 mules, and all the cattle in the snow, which was six feet deep. In the fore part of May reached St. Mary's River — on 4th July, 1836, Quepaw or Bear River and thence proceeded to St. Louis, Mo., with their furs."

In this account the place of starting does not agree with the Walker expedition. The killing of Small is not recorded by any other authority, and the time of departure from California does not agree with Leonard. The Walker expedition arrived at Bear River or the Great Salt Lake about July, 1834, and not in 1836 as given in this account.

*From the above description of the attitude of these Indians, they were not as harmless as Bonneville would lead us to suppose even if they were the despised Diggers; they were evidently waiting for a favorable opportunity to attack the company, and were certainly not following in such large numbers for any other purpose. Being at the same time saucy and bold, it was only a matter of time when these Indians would have had to be punished for their increasing insolence, and this is no doubt what Captain Walker had in mind, when he says, "There is nothing equal to a good start in such a case."

The position of these men was not an enviable one. Here they were in the midst of Indians "sufficiently numerous to have destroyed us," who were treacherous and only seeking for a good opportunity to destroy them. They were on a desert waste of which they knew nothing — with no guide or knowledge of the route, at every step they were getting farther from any hope of succor in case of distress; they knew not what obstacles they were yet to encounter or what Indians they were to meet in the country that lay between them and California. No one had as yet gone over this route, and all were ignorant of the distance they had yet to go. They were, however, on the route on which in later years the Union Pacific Railroad was built, and under their feet lay gold sufficient to have satisfied their wildest dreams. They were justified in striking a blow to teach the Indians to keep at a respectful distance and not molest them, after the many warnings they received; but it is a question whether it was justifiable and necessary to carry it to the extent they did. Leonard states that "their object was to strike a decisive blow. This we did — even to a greater extent than we had intended."

These Indians* are totally naked — both male and female — with the exception of a shield of grass, which they wear around their loins. They are generally small and weak, and some of them very hairy. They subsist upon grass-seed, frogs, fish, &c. — Fish, however, are very scarce — their manner of catching which, is somewhat novel and singular. They take the leg-bone of a sand-hill crane, which is generally about 18 inches long, this is fastened in the end of a pole — they then, by means of a raft made of rushes, which are very plenty — float along the surface of these lakes, and spear the fish. They exhibit great dexterity with this simple structure — sometimes killing a fish with it at a great distance. They also have a kind of hook by which they sometimes are very successful, but it does not afford them as much sport as the spear. This hook is formed of a small bone, ground down on a sand-stone, and a double beard cut in it with a flint — they then have a line made of wild flax. This line is tied nearest the beard end of the hook, by pulling the line the sharp end with the beard, catches, and turns the bone crossways in its mouth.

These lakes are all joined together by means of the river which passes from one to another, until it reaches the largest, which has no out-let.† The water in this lake becomes stagnant and very disagreeable — its surface being covered with a green substance, similar to a stagnant frog pond. In warm weather there is a fly, about the size and similar to a grain of wheat, on this lake, in great numbers. — When the wind rolls the waters onto the shore, these flies are left on the beach — the female Indians then carefully gather them into baskets made of willow branches, and lay them exposed to the sun until they become per-

*Pai-utes or Root Diggers (Diggers) sometimes called Snake Indians.
†Humboldt Lake into which Humboldt River empties.

fectly dry, when they are laid away for winter provender. These flies, together with grass seed, and a few rabbits, is their principal food during the winter season.

Their habitations are formed of a round hole dug in the ground, over which sticks are placed, giving it the shape of a potatoe hole — this is covered with grass & earth — the door at one side and the fire at the other. They cook in a pot made of stiff mud, which they lay upon the fire & burn; but from the sandy nature of the mud, after cooking a few times, it falls to pieces, when they make a new one.

The Indians call themselves Shoshocoes; and the Lakes have been named Battle Lakes.

On the 10th of October we left these Indians and built rafts out of rushes to convey us across the river,* when we left the Lakes and continued our course in the direction of a large mountain, which was in sight, and which we could see was covered with snow on the summit. In the evening we encamped on the margin of a large Lake formed by a river which heads in this mountain. This lake, likewise, has no outlet for the water, except that which sinks into the ground. The water in this lake is similar to lie, and tastes much like pearlash.† If this river was in the vicinity of some city, it would be of inestimable value, as it is admirably calculated to wash clothes without soap, and no doubt could be appropriated to many valuable uses. There is also a great quantity of pummice stone floating on the surface of the water, and the shore is covered with them. The next day we travelled up this river towards the mountain, where we encamped for the night. This

*They undoubtedly travelled down the south bank of the Humboldt to near the point where it empties into Humboldt Lake. Here the river takes a sharp turn to the south and empties into the lake, and it must have been at this point that they crossed the river, going around the west side of Humboldt Lake, thence to Carson Lake.

†Probably Carson Lake, as its waters are alkali.

mountain is very high, as the snow extends down the side nearly half way — the mountain runs North and South.

In the morning we despatched hunters to the mountain on search of game and also to look out for a pass over the mountain, as our provisions were getting scarce — our dried buffaloe meat being almost done. After prowling about all day, our hunters returned in the evening, bringing the unwelcome tidings that they had not seen any signs of game in all their ramblings, and what was equally discouraging, that they had seen no practicable place for crossing the mountain. They, however, had with them a young colt and camel,* which they secured by the natives taking fright and running off, when the hunters came in sight. The next morning, having eaten the last of our dried buffaloe meat, it was decided that the colt should be killed and divided equally to each man. Our situation was growing worse every hour, and something required to be done to extricate ourselves. Our horses were reduced very much from the fatigues of our journey and light food, having travelled through a poor, sandy country extending from the buffaloe country of the Rocky Mountains, to our present encampment, a distance of about 1200 miles, without encountering a single hill of any consequence, (with the exception of the one in which Barren river heads, and that we went around,) and so poor and bare that nothing can subsist on it with the exception of rabbits — these being the only game we had met with since we had left the buffaloe country, with the exception of one or two antelopes. Notwithstanding these plains forbids the support of animals of every description, yet I do not believe that we passed a single day without seeing Indians, or fresh signs, and some days hundreds of them.† To-day

*This must be an error as camels are surely not to be found in the wild state in the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

†They had during this time been gradually working toward the south along the east side of the mountains.

we sent out several scouting parties to search out a pass over the mountain. Capt. Walker, Nidever and myself started out together. After getting part of the way up the mountain we came to a grove of timber, where the mountain was too steep for our horses, and we left them, and travelled on foot. Nidever was separated from us, when two Indians made their appearance, but as soon as they saw us, they took to flight and run directly towards Nidever, who at once supposed they had been committing some mischief with us, fired, and, as they were running one behind the other, killed them both at one shot. After this unpleasant circumstance we went back to our horses, and from thence to camp. Mr. Nidever was very sorry when he discovered what he had done.* In the evening the balance of our scouting parties returned, but none of them had killed any game. One of them had found an Indian path, which they thought led over the mountain — whereupon it was resolved that in the morning we would take this path, as it seemed to be our only prospect of preservation. Accordingly, at an early hour the next morning we started on our journey along the foot of the mountain in search of the path discovered on the previous day, and found it. On examination we found that horses travelled it, and must of course come from the west. This gave us great encouragement, as we were very fearful we would not be able to get our horses over at all. Here we encamped for the night. In the morning we started on our toilsome journey.† Ascending the mountain we

*Bancroft (*Hist. of Nevada*, p. 43) mentions this affair, but puts forward an entirely different motive for the killing of the two Indians. "Nidever, admits however, that a little later he could not resist the temptation to kill two Indians with one shot, thus avenging his brother who had been treacherously murdered some time before." We are inclined to think Leonard's account is the correct one; had Nidever been seeking revenge he would have scarcely waited until he could have killed two at one shot, having had many opportunities previous to this to satisfy his revengeful spirit.

†They probably went by Walker's Lake and up Walker River to the neighborhood of Mono Lake where they crossed the mountains.

found to be very difficult from the rocks and its steepness. This day we made but poor speed, and encamped on the side of the mountain.

Oct. 16. Continued our course until in the afternoon, when we arrived at what we took for the top, where we again encamped, but without any thing to eat for our horses, as the ground was covered with a deep snow, which from appearance, lays on the North side of the peaks, the whole year around. These peaks are generally covered with rocks and sand, — totally incapable of vegetation; except on the South side, where grows a kind of Juniper or Gin shrub, bearing a berry tasting similar to gin. Here we passed the night without any thing to eat except these gin berries, and some of the insects from the lake described above, which our men had got from the Indians. We had not suffered much from cold for several months previous to this; but this night, surrounded as we were with the everlasting snows on the summit of this mountain, the cold was felt with three fold severity.

In taking a view the next morning of the extensive plains through which we had travelled, its appearance is awfully sublime. As far as the eye can reach, you can see nothing but an unbroken level, tiresome to the eye to behold. To the East the aspect is truly wonderful. The sight meets with nothing but a poor sandy plain, extending from the base of the Rocky mountains to the level below — interposed with several rivers winding their way, here and there forming innumerable lakes, having their margins thinly adorned with a few withering and fading cottonwood trees — where the water ceases to flow, and sinks into the sand. But this is not all. The rivers which head in this mountan, all lead towards the East, as if to meet those from the Rocky mountains, and likewise empty into the lakes. The next morning it was with no cheerful pros-

pect that each man prepared himself for travelling, as we had nothing to eat worth mentioning. As we advanced, in the hollows sometimes we would encounter prodigious quantities of snow. When we would come to such places, a certain portion of the men would be appointed alternately to go forward and break the road, to enable our horses to get through; and if any of the horses would get swamped, these same men were to get them out. In this tedious and tiresome manner we spent the whole day without going more than 8 or 10 miles. In some of these ravines where the snow is drifted from the peaks, it never entirely melts, and may be found at this season of the year, from ten to one hundred feet deep. From appearance it never melts on the top, but in warm weather the heap sinks by that part melting which lays next the ground. This day's travel was very severe on our horses, as they had not a particle to eat. They began to grow stupid and stiff, and we began to despair of getting them over the mountain. We encamped this night on the south side of one of these peaks or ridges without any thing to eat, and almost without fire. To add to the troubles and fatigues which we encountered in the day time, in getting over the rocks and through the snow, we had the mortification this evening to find that some of our men had become almost unmanageable, and were desirous of turning back and retracing our steps to the buffaloe country! The voice of the majority, which always directs the movements of such a company, would not pacify them; nor had the earnest appeals of our captain any effect. The distance was too great for them to undertake without being well provided, and the only way they could be prevented, was by not letting them have any of the horses or ammunition. Two of our horses were so much reduced that it was thought they would not be able to travel in the morning

at all, whereupon it was agreed that they should be butchered for the use of the men. This gave our men fresh courage, and we went to bed this night in better spirits than we had done for a long time. Some of the men had fasted so long, and were so much in want of nourishment, that they did not know when they had satisfied the demands of nature, and eat as much and as eagerly of this black, tough, lean, horse flesh, as if it had been the choicest piece of beef steak.

In the morning, after freely partaking of the horse meat, and sharing the remainder to each man, we renewed our journey, now and then coming onto an Indian path, but as they did not lead in the direction we were going, we did not follow them — but the most of the distance we this day travelled, we had to encounter hills, rocks and deep snows. The snow in most of the hollows we this day passed through, looks as if it had remained here all summer, as eight or ten inches from the top it was packed close and firm — the top being loose and light, having fell only a day or two previous. About the middle of the afternoon we arrived at a small Lake or pond, where we concluded to encamp, as at this pond we found a small quantity of very indifferent grass, but which our horses cropped off with great eagerness. Here we spent the night, having yet seen nothing to create a hope that we had arrived near the opposite side of the mountain — and what was equally as melancholy, having yet discovered no signs of game.

The next morning we resumed our labour, fortunately finding less snow and more timber, besides a number of small lakes, and some prospect of getting into a country that produced some kind of vegetation. The timber is principally pine, cedar and red wood, mostly of a scrubby and knotty quality. After travelling a few miles,

further however, than any other day since we had reached the top of the mountain, we again encamped on the margin of another small lake, where we also had the good fortune to find some pasture for our horses. This evening it was again decided to kill three more of our horses which had grown entirely worthless from severe travelling and little food. The next morning several parties were despatched on search of a pass over the mountain, and to make search for game; but they all returned in the evening without finding either. The prospect at this time began to grow somewhat gloomy and threaten us with hard times again. We were at a complete stand. No one was acquainted with the country, nor no person knew how wide the summit of this mountain was.*—We had travelled for five days since we arrived at what we supposed to be the summit — were now still surrounded with snow and rugged peaks — the vigour of every man almost exhausted — nothing to give our poor horses, which were no longer any assistance to us in travelling, but a burthen, for we had to help the most of them along as we would an old and feeble man.

This mountain must be near as high as the main chain of the Rocky mountains† — at least a person would judge so from the vast quantity of snow with which it is covered, and the coldness of the air. The descent from the Rocky mountains to this is but trifling, and supposed by all the company not to be greater than we had ascended this mountain from the plain — though we had no means of ascertaining the fact. It is true, however, that the vast plain through which we had travelled was almost perfectly

*Dr. Bunnell states that Capt. Walker told him they had Mono Indians to guide them across the mountains. This must be a mistake, as no authorities mention them, while Leonard makes it quite clear they had no guides.

†These are the Sierra Nevada Mountains, or the California Mountain of Leonard, and the Mount Joseph of Jedediah S. Smith.

level, on part of which the water gradually descended to the West, and on the other towards the East.

Our situation was growing more distressing every hour, and all we now thought of, was to extricate ourselves from this inhospitable region; and, as we were perfectly aware, that to travel on foot was the only way of succeeding, we spent no time in idleness — scarcely stopping in our journey to view an occasional specimen of the wonders of nature's handy-work. We travelled a few miles every day, still on the top of the mountain, and our course continually obstructed with snow hills and rocks. Here we began to encounter in our path, many small streams which would shoot out from under these high snow-banks, and after running a short distance in deep chasms which they have through ages cut in the rocks, precipitate themselves from one lofty precipice to another, until they are exhausted in rain below. — Some of these precipices appeared to us to be more than a mile high.* Some of the men thought that if we could succeed in descending one of these precipices to the bottom, we might thus work our way into the valley below — but on making several attempts we found it utterly impossible for a man to descend, to say nothing of our horses.† We were then obliged to keep along the top of the dividing ridge between two of these chasms which seemed to lead pretty near in the direction we were going — which was West, — in passing over

*Is this the Yosemite Valley? There is much in this short description that corresponds with what we know of this wonderland.

†These heights here described are no doubt those surrounding the Yosemite and the falls, the water of which turns to mist before reaching the bottom. Captain Walker informed Dr. Bunnell that he encamped on the heights overlooking the Yosemite, on November 13, 1833; something to this effect was also placed upon his tombstone. By Leonard's uncertain dates they were at this point in the later part of October.

The San José *Pioneer* some years ago after investigating the question as to who was the discoverer of the Yosemite, remarks, "His [Captain Walker's] were the first white man's eyes that ever looked upon the Yosemite." This is conceded by Dr. Bunnell also, who with a party were the first to enter the valley about 1851.

the mountain, supposing it to run north & south. In this manner we continued until the 25th, without any particular occurrence, except that of our horses dying daily — the flesh of which we preserved for food. Our course was very rough & tiresome, having to encounter one hill of snow and one ledge of rocks after another. On the 25th every man appeared to be more discouraged and downspirited than ever, and I thought that our situation would soon be beyond hope if no prospect of getting from the mountain would now be discovered. This day we sent out several parties on discoveries, who returned in the evening without bringing the least good news, except one man, who was last coming, having separated from his companions, brought a basket full of acorns to camp.* These were the first acorns we had seen since we left the State of Missouri. These nuts our hunter had got from an Indian who had them on his back travelling as though he was on a journey across the mountain, to the East side. — When the Indian seen our hunter he dropped his basket of provision and run for life. These nuts caused no little rejoicing in our camp, not only on account of their value as food, but because they gave us the gratifying evidence that a country mild and salubrious enough to produce acorns was not far distant, which must be vastly different from any we had passed through for a long time. We now felt agreeably surprised that we had succeeded so far and so prosperously, in a region of many miles in extent where a native Indian could find nothing to eat in traversing the same route, but acorns. These nuts are quite different from those in Missouri — being much larger and more

*These acorns grow in great abundance on the west side of the Sierra Nevada Mountains; they are quite large and are a favorite food of the Indians, which they prepare in many ways. They store them in peculiar hooded granaries made of grass, raised up from the ground, for winter use. They have dances during certain seasons, known as acorn dances.

palatable. They are from 1½ to 3 inches in length, and about ¾ in diameter, and when roasted in the ashes or broiled, are superior to any chesnuts I ever eat — (though a person subsisting upon very lean horse meat for several days is hardly capable of judging with precision in a case of this kind.)

The next morning we resumed our journey somewhat revived with the strong expectation that after a few days more tedious travelling, we would find ourselves in a country producing some kind of game by which we might recruit our languid frames, and pasture to resuscitate the famished condition of our horses. We still found snow in abundance, but our course was not so much obstructed with rocks as formerly. In two or three days we arrived at the brink of the mountain. This at first was a happy sight, but when we approached close, it seemed to be so near perpendicular that it would be folly to attempt a descent. In looking on the plain below with the naked eye, you have one of the most singular prospects in nature; from the great height of the mountain the plain presents a dim yellow appearance; — but on taking a view with the spy glass we found it to be a beautiful plain stretched out towards the west until the horizon presents a barrier to the sight. From the spot where we stood to the plain beneath, must at least be a distance of three miles, as it is almost perpendicular, a person cannot look down without feeling as if he was wafted to and fro in the air, from the giddy height. A great many were the surmises as to the distance and direction to the nearest point of the Pacific. Captain Walker, who was a man well acquainted with geography, was of the opinion that it was not much further than we could see with the aid of our glass, as the plain had the appearance of a sea shore. Here we encamped for the night, and sent men out to discover some convenient pas-

sage down towards the plain — who returned after an absence of a few hours and reported that they had discovered a pass or Indian trail which they thought would answer our purpose, and also some signs of deer and bear, which was equally as joyful news — as we longed to have a taste of some palatable food. The next morning after pursuing our course a few miles along the edge of the mountain top we arrived at the path discovered by our men, and immediately commenced the descent, gladly leaving the cold and famished region of snow behind. The mountain was extremely steep and difficult to descend, and the only way we could come any speed was by taking a zigzag direction, first clim[b]ing along one side and then turning to the other, until we arrived at a ledge or precipice of rocks, of great height, and extending eight or ten miles along the mountain — where we halted and sent men in each direction to ascertain if there was any possibility of getting over this obstruction. In the afternoon of the same day our men returned without finding any safe passage thro' the rocks — but one man succeeded in killing a small deer, which he carried all the way to camp on his back — this was dressed, cooked and eat in less time than a hungry wolf would devour a lamb.

This was the first game larger than a rabbit we had killed since the 4th of August* when we killed the last buffaloe near the Great Salt Lake, and the first we had eat since our dried meat was exhausted, (being 14 days,) during which time we lived on stale and forbidden horse flesh. I was conscious that it was not such meat as a dog would feast on, but we were driven to extremes and had either

*This date is probably correct; he states in another place that the last buffalo was killed on September 4th, it is confusing from the fact that he states they left the rendezvous on the 20th of August — making the killing of the last buffalo about two weeks before the start — as a matter of fact they started from the rendezvous one month earlier than the date given by him. We have this from Bonneville and other authorities.

to do this or die. It was the most unwholesome as well as the most unpleasant food I ever eat or ever expect to eat — and I hope that no other person will ever be compelled to go through the same. It seemed to be the greatest cruelty to take your rifle, when your horse sinks to the ground from starvation, but still manifests a desire and willingness to follow you, to shoot him in the head and then cut him up & take such parts of their flesh as extreme hunger alone will render it possible for a human being to eat. This we done several times, and it was the only thing that saved us from death. 24 of our horses died since we arrived on top of the mountain — 17 of which we eat the best parts.

When our men returned without finding any passage over the rocks, we searched for a place that was as smooth and gradual in the descent as possible, and after finding one we brought our horses, and by fastening ropes round them let them down one at a time without doing them any injury. After we got our horses and baggage all over the rocks we continued our course down the mountain, which still continued very steep and difficult. The circumstance of one of our men killing a deer greatly cheered the languid spirits of our hunters, and after we got safely over the rocks several of the men started out on search of game, although it was then near night. The main body continued on down until we arrived at some green oak bushes, where we encamped for the night, to wait for our hunters, — who returned soon after dark well paid for their labour, having killed two large black tailed deer and a black bear, and all very fat and in good eating order. This night we passed more cheerful and in better heart than any we had spent for a long time. Our meat was dressed and well cooked, and every man felt in good order to partake of it.

In descending the mountain this far we have found but little snow, and began to emerge into a country which had some signs of vegetation — having passed thro' several groves of green oak bushes, &c. The principal timber which we came across, is Red-Wood, White Cedar and the Balsom tree. We continued down the side of the mountain at our leisure, finding the timber much larger and better, game more abundant and the soil more fertile. Here we found plenty of oak timber, bearing a large quantity of acorns, though of a different kind from those taken from the Indian on the mountain top. In the evening of the 30th we arrived at the foot or base of this mountain — having spent almost a month in crossing over.* Along the base of this mountain it is quite romantic — the soil is very productive — the timber is immensely large and plenty, and game, such as deer, elk, grizzly bear and ante-

*As to the route and time taken for this journey across the mountains Bonneville says, "They then struck directly westward, across the great chain of Californian Mountains. . . . For three and twenty days they were entangled among these mountains, the peaks and ridges of which are in many places covered with perpetual snow. . . . For a part of the time they were nearly starved; at length they made their way through them, and came down upon the plains of New California. . . . . They now turned towards the south, and . . . . arrived at the Spanish village and post of Monterey."

Stephen Meek, who was a member of the party, tells us "they traveled now four days across the salt plains when they struck the Californian Mountains, crossing which took fifteen days, and in fourteen days more they reached the two Laries" — meaning the Tulares; "killed a horse, and subsisting on the same eleven days came to the Spanish settlements." Jo Meek, in Mrs. Victor's *River of the West*, gives the route rather definitely, westward to Pyramid Lake, up the Truckee River, and across the mountains — very much the same route as the present railroad line — into the Sacramento Valley, and then southward. He also states that they met a company of soldiers out hunting for cattle-thieves in the San José Valley, and were taken prisoners to Monterey — thus giving the journey a very dramatic ending — all of which was from the trapper's imagination, says Bancroft. Finally, a newspaper version, founded on Walker's own statements, and corroborated to some extent by that of Nidever, gives what I suppose to have been the correct route from the sink, southwestward by way of what are now Carson Lake and Walker Lake and River, over the Sierra near the headwaters of the Merced, and down into the San Joaquin Valley. Leonard's description of the route certainly is in accord with the latter and he gives evidence that they crossed about this point, in his description of what is probably the Yosemite Valley; a still more positive evidence is that they made their exit from the mountains, and came at once in contact with the giant redwoods of Mariposa, there is no mistaking these big trees from Leonard's description. This also helps to confirm the route as being through or near the Yosemite, thence by way of the Merced to the San Joaquin River.

lopes are remarkably plenty. — From the mountain out to the plain, a distance varying from 10 to 20 miles, the timber stands as thick as it could grow, and the land is well watered by a number of small streams rising here and there along the mountain. In the last two days travelling we have found some trees of the Red-wood species, incredibly large — some of which would measure from 16 to 18 fathom round the trunk at the height of a man's head from the ground.*

On the 31st we pursued our course towards the plain in a western direction. — Now, that we had reached a country thickly filled with almost all kinds of game, our men and particularly those fond of hunting, were in fine spirits. This day our company was much scattered, and we coud hardly tell which was the main body, as the men were stretched over a large space of ground, all moving within each others hearing towards the plain. After a walk of about fifteen miles we arrived at the margin of the woods, where we concluded to spend the remainder of the day and night. When our men all gathered together it was astonishing to see the quantity of game which they had collected — principally deer and bear. Our hunters complained very much because there was no buffaloe here — as killing these animals afford the hunter such fine sport; and they would not believe any thing else than that buffaloe inhabited this region until they had made several unsuccessful hunts — as the climate and soil is about the same, the grass equally as good and plenty, and the prairies and forests as extensive as those of the region of the Rocky Mountains. But none of these animals have ever been

*This statement of Leonard's makes it perfectly clear that these are the big-trees of California, the giant redwoods of Mariposa, and this is, so far as we know, the earliest published account of them. The locality also agrees, which also tends to prove that they were in the neighborhood of the Yosemite. To them must therefore be given the credit of discovering these giant wonders of California.

found west of the Great Salt Lake, which is about three hundred miles west of the summit of the Rocky mountains.

On the following morning we directed our course across or rather along the plain, until we came to a large river heading in the mountain and wending its way through the plain. This river presents more wonderful curiosities than any other stream we passed. Its bed lays very deep forming very high banks, even in smooth and level parts of the country; but where there is rocks its appearance is beyond doubt the most remarkable of any other water course. Some places the rocks are piled up perpendicular to such a height that a man on top, viewed from the bed of the river, does not look larger than a small child. From the appearance of these precipices it is not exaggerating to state that they may be found from a quarter to half a mile high — and many of them no wider at the top than at the bottom. Through such places the river forces its way with great rapid[i]ty, tossing pitching & foaming to such a degree that no Indian has the courage to attempt to navigate it with his canoe. — When the water passes through these *narrows* it spreads out in a beautiful deep bay as if to repose after its turbulent dashing against the rocks immediately above, until it reaches the next rapids, when it again pitches forward.* This plain is well watered and is quite productive, as we found a large quantity of wild pumpkins and wild oats.

This night it was decided that we should forthwith commence trapping for furs and make this expedition as profitable as possible, for, as yet we had spent much time

*The Merced River. Leonard makes no mention of the fact that this river joins the San Joaquin, which they undoubtedly followed.

and toil, and lost many horses, without realizing any profit whatever — although every man expressed himself fully compensated for his labour, by the many natural curiosities which we had discovered. According to the arrangements made on the evening previous, we all the next morning commenced travelling down the river at a slow gate, carefully examining for beaver signs, and recruiting our horses, which they had much need of, as we found them to be much more injured in crossing the mountains than we had at first supposed — many of them being sprained and stiffened almost beyond recovery, and certainly beyond present use. We laid up a large supply of deer, elk, and bear meat, of the best kind. These animals are the fattest of the kind I had ever eat. Here we found a large quantity of acorns, such as those taken from the Indian. These acorns compose the principal food of the wild animals in this section, — the bear, I believe, solely subsists upon them, and where acorns are scarce, the game is both poor and scarce.

The country here appears to be in many respects similar to the east side of the Rocky mountains. The land is generally smooth and level, and the plains or prairies are very extensive, stretching towards the setting sun as far as the eye can reach; whilst a number of beautiful rivers, all heading in this rugged mountain, running parallel with each other thro' the plain, also to the west, with their banks handsomely adorned with flourishing timber of different kinds, such as Blackwalnut, Hickory, Oak, Elm, Mulbery, Hackberry, Alder, Shoemack, &c. This grove of timber may be found along the river at any point, and generally extends about four miles into the plain. Between this grove of timber, and the forest extending from the foot of the mountain, there is a level prairie of the richest soil,

producing grass in abundance of the most delightful and valuable quality.*

These prairies are in many places swarming with wild Horses, some of which are quite docile, particularly the males, on seeing our horses. They are all very fat, and can be seen of all colors, from spotted or white, to jet black; and here, as in the land of civilization, they are the most beautiful and noble, as well as the most valuable of the whole brute creation.

Since we left the mountain we have seen many signs of Indians, such as moccasin tracks, and smoke rising from the prairies in different places, but as yet we had not succeeded in getting in company with any. At this season of the year, when the grass in these plains is dry, if a fire should be started it presents a spectacle truly grand — and if the flame is assisted with a favorable wind, it will advance with such speed that the wild horses and other animals are sometimes puzzled to get out of the road, and every thing looks overwhelmed with consternation. We continued travelling down the river until the 7th of November, when we arrived at five Indian huts, containing 15 or 20 Indians male and female. When they first beheld the approach of beings so mysterious as we were to them, they exhibited the most unbounded alarm and fear. But it was not long till we succeeded in calming their terror, and convincing them that they had no reason to apprehend any danger, by showing a willingness to smoke, (this being the first token of friendship with all Indians,) which they at once understood and immediately became reconciled, and we commenced gathering all the information from them that our limited means would afford.

*We wish to call attention to the elegant description of the California country as given by Leonard — the climate, soil, game, Indians, timber, and native grasses; the topography of the country as well as the characteristics of the native Californian.

— each being entirely ignorant of the others language, and the Indians being extremely awkward both in making and understanding signs — which is the principal method of conversation with the different tribes in this region. After making many efforts to get some information from them with reference to the Big Water, white people, beaver, &c., without receiving any further satisfaction by way of answer to our inquiries, than a grunt similar to that of a hog, we concluded to spend the night with them for further trial. Towards night whilst passing through their camp, some of our men found two blankets and a knife, which convinced us at once that they had some communication with white people. When the blankets were held up to them they pronounced in tolerable distinctness, the word *Spanish*, and pointed to the west — from which circumstance we inferred that the Spanish settlement could not be far distant.

The next morning our Indian hosts bro't some horses to the camp for the purpose of trading, which were marked with a Spanish brand. After trading for five of the best of their horses, for which we gave one yard of scarlet cloth and two knives; we left these Indians and continued down the river in search of beaver, which are very scarce. These Indians are quite small, & much darker than those of the buffaloe country, as well as more indolent & slothful. They generally run naked with the exception of a few, who wear shields made of some kind of skins. Their huts are composed of dry polls or logs set upon end, and their bedding consists of grass. Their food is composed principally of horse meat and acorns — the latter are very large and of a good quality,which they manufacture into a kind of mush. Their method of manufacturing this is as follows: — They go to a large log and build a fire upon it and burn it half or two-thirds of the way through, which is done

by keeping the log wet except about a foot in diameter, where the fire is kept up until the hole is deep enough, and of the proper shape. After the hole is burnt deep enough they extinguish the fire, scrape out the coals and ashes, and have a tolerably well shaped *hopper*. When this is done they get a long stone which is rounded at one end, and put the acorns in and commence mashing them fine, which is easily done as they are always previously dried by fire or the sun. The meal thus made is then taken out & mixed with water in a basket made almost water-tight — which they broil by making stones red hot and throwing them into the basket. By this process they make a kind of mush with which any hungry man would be glad to satiate his appetite.

These Indians also appear very delicate and feeble — which they attribute to eating acorns.* To-day, whilst some of our hunters were searching for beaver signs along the river beach, they found the carcases of four Indians, two of which were partly consumed by Grizzly bears. They appeared as if they had died natural deaths, and been laid there by their friends according to their custom of disposing of the dead, as two of them were well wrapped up in beaver skins. This day our course lay through a large prairie covered with wild oats — which at this season of the year when nothing but the stock remains, has much the appearance of common oats. — This plain lays on the South side of the river, to which we gave the name of Oat Plain. The grizzly bear and wild horses appeared more numerous in the country through which we

*A few years previous to this time, a scourge appeared among the California Indians of the low lands, which proved quite as fatal to them as the ravages of the smallpox to the Indians of the Missouri. From the accounts we have of the same it was no doubt a form of malarial poisoning. As they are rather poorly developed and badly nourished, with constitutions undermined by diseases, the inroads made by this scourge were fearful. But the Indians of the foot-hills were not affected to any extent.

this day passed, than I had ever before known them. In the evening just before sunset we came across the carcase of another Indian, which was also partly eaten by the wild beasts. From the numerous signs we were led to the belief that the country through which we were now travelling was thickly inhabited with Indians, but notwithstanding we kept watch both night and day we were unable to discover any but those we had left in the morning; nor could we find any of their habitations, although we would sometimes come across a trail that looked as if it was traversed by hundreds at a time. We also discovered some signs of white people, as we would occasionally come across a tree or log chopped with an axe as if done by trappers and hunters. At this place the river is from two to three hundred yards wide, as the country is generally level the water moves gently forward, being quite deep, clear and smooth.* This night we encamped on the bank of the river in a very beautiful situation. Soon after the men went to rest and the camp had became quieted, we were startled by a loud distant noise similar to that of thunder. Whilst lying close to the ground this noise could be distinctly heard for a considerable length of time without intermission. When it was at first observed some of our men were much alarmed, as they readily supposed it was occasioned by an earthquake, and they began to fear that we would all be swallowed up in the bowels of the earth; and others judged it to be the noise of a neighboring cataract. Capt. Walker, however, suggested a more plausible cause, which allayed the fears of the most timid. He supposed that the noise originated by the Pacific rolling and dashing her boisterous waves against the rocky shore. Had any of us ever before been at the coast, we would have readily accounted for the mysterious noise.

*The San Joaquin, probably near its mouth.

The idea of being within hearing of the *end* of the *Far West* inspired the heart of every member of our company with a patriotic feeling for his country's honor, and all were eager to loose no time until they should behold what they had heard. We felt as if all our previous hardships and privations would be adequately compensated, if we would be spared to return in safety to the homes of our kindred and have it to say that we had stood upon the extreme end of the great west. The two next days we travelled very fast, without meeting with any thing to impede our progress. On the night of the 12th our men were again thrown into great consternation by the singular appearance of the heavens. Soon after dark the air appeared to be completely thickened with meteors falling towards the earth, some of which would explode in the air and others would be dashed to pieces on the ground, frightening our horses so much that it required the most active vigilance of the whole company to keep them together. This was altogether a mystery to some of the men who probably had never before seen or heard of anything of the kind, but after an explanation from Capt. Walker, they were satisfied that no danger need be apprehended from the falling of the stars, as they were termed.*

After travelling a few miles the next morning we arrived at the head of tide water, which convinced us that the noise we had heard a few days previous was created by the ocean. We continued down the river until we arrived at the bay,† where it mingles its water with the briny ocean. The country here lays very low, & looks as if it was subject to being overflowed. Here we found difficult travelling owing to the ground being wet and swampy. In the vicinity of this

*This is the celebrated meteoric phenomenon which occurred on the night of November 12, 1833, and was observed throughout the whole of the United States, and caused much speculation among the superstitious.

†The northern arm of San Francisco Bay.

bay we found a great many Indians, who were mostly occupied in fishing — which are very plenty. These Indians appeared friendly enough, but then they manifested a kind of careless indifference, whether they treated us well or ill, that we did not like, and we therefore concluded to leave this place and make for the main coast as soon as possible,—and accordingly we started in a southern direction and after travelling a day and a half the broad Pacific burst forth to view on the 20th.* The first night we encamped quite close to the beach near a spring of delightful water. The scenes which we could now contemplate was quite different from those we had beheld and dwelt amidst for months back. Here was a smooth unbroken sheet of water stretched out far beyond the reach of the eye — altogether different from mountains, rocks, snows & the toilsome plains we had traversed. Here we occasionally found the traces of white men, and as the Indians still appeared to act so strange, we began to think that the Spaniards had the Indians under complete subjection, and that they could, if so disposed, set them on us and give us trouble. It was therefore thought best to find out the whereabouts of the Spaniards and cultivate their friendship. The Indians here practice fishing to a great extent; indeed it seems to be the only thing they do. — They have many methods of catching them — but the principal process is by spearing them with bones made sharp, and some have proper instruments of Spanish manufacture, in which they are very expert. — The principal fish in the river we came down, and which has the principal Indian fisheries, are shad and salmon. We did not find out the name of this tribe, or whether they consider themselves distinct from any other tribe. Most all of the natives we met with since crossing the last mountain,

*They traveled around the east side of the bay to its lower point and then to the coast; as the settlement of San Francisco was on the opposite side of the bay near the ocean, they did not pass near it.

seem to belong to the same nation, as they were about the same colour and size — spoke the same language for any thing we could discover to the contrary, and all appeared equally ignorant and dillatory — and most of them entirely naked. They have no particular place of residence but claim the whole of the country stretching from the mountain to the sea shore as their own. In some parts the natives raise a small quantity of corn, pumpkins, melons, &c., the soil being so very strong and mellow, that it requires but little labour to raise good crops.

21st. This morning the ocean was not so calm as it was the previous evening. — All its sleeping energies were lashed into fury, and the mountain waves of the great deep would roll and dash against the shore, producing the most deafening sound. In the course of the day a detachment of our company was despatched to make discoveries, who returned in the evening and stated that they had discovered many signs of white people, whom they supposed to be Spaniards, but they were unable to come up with them. This same party also found the carcase of a whale which was ninety feet long — the tusks weighing 4½ pounds. About noon of the third day after we arrived here, the attention of the company was directed to an object which could be dimly seen at a distance riding on the water, which was immediately judged to be a ship, but no one knew from whence it came, where it belonged or where going. It was now our curiosity to know more of this singular object and if possible to attract their attention and bring them to shore. Accordingly we fastened two white blankets together and hoisted them into the air on a pole. This had the desired effect. It was not long until we could tell that the distance between us was fast diminishing, and our joy and surprise may be imagined when we beheld the broad stripes and bright stars of the American flag waiving majestically in

the air at the mast head. The ship anchored some distance from the shore and the boats were despatched to see what nation we belonged to, and what our business was. Their astonishment was equally as great as ours when they ascertained that we were children of the same nation of themselves. On making this discovery, and a signal to that effect being given by the boats, the ship fired several salutes of canon in honor of our meeting, which made the welkin ring. — On further acquaintance we ascertained this ship (the Lagoda) to belong to Boston, commanded by Capt. Baggshaw.* After exchanging civilities by shaking hands all round, Capt. Baggshaw strongly insisted on us going on board and partaking of the ships fare, stating that he had a few casks of untapped Coneac.† This was an invitation that none of us had the least desire to refuse, and accordingly 45 of us went on board the Lagoda, leaving the remainder to take care of the camp, &c. When arriving on the ship Capt. B., had a table spread with the choicest of liquors & best fair the ship would afford, which was immediately surrounded with hungry Capt's, Mates, Clerks, Sailors and greasy trappers — after eating, the glass was passed around in quick succession, first drinking after the fashion of brave Jack Tars, and afterwards in the mountain style, mixed with something of the manners of the natives, in order to amuse the sailors.

After we got on board, the sea became very rough, causing the vessel to pitch and plunge a great deal as she lay at anchor, and consequently I was compelled to return to shore from sea sickness. The balance remained and kept up the celebration until daylight the next morning,

*Lagoda, an American ship of 292 tons; John Bradshaw, whom Leonard calls Baggshaw, Master; Bryant & Sturgis, owners (Boston); Robinson, owner's agent. She was on the coast from the autumn of 1833 to the spring of 1835 (David Spence's list).

†Brandy.

when they all returned to land, accompanied by the ships crew to taper off on the harder fare of the trapper and hunter. The feast on the vessel was far superior to anything we could give them, although they appeared perfectly satisfied with the reception they met with from us, as it was a long time since they had tasted any fresh meat, or any thing but salted victuals; and theirs was the first bread, butter, cheese, &c., that we had seen for more than two years.

After the feasting was at an end, Capt. Baggshaw gave us a description of the country to enable us to lay our plans accordingly. He said the nearest settlement was the town of St. Francisco, about forty miles north of our present encampment, situated on the south side of the Francisco Bay, formed by the river which we descended, which he calls Two Laries or Bush river.* It is about three-fourths of a mile wide at its mouth, and is considered a safe harbor for almost any quantity of vessels; and within 60 or 70 miles South of us is the town of Monterey, also Spanish, the capital of this province, & which is called Upper Calafornia. He also informed us that about 60 or 70 miles north of St. Francisco, and about 100 miles from our present position was a Russian settlement, which consists of about 150 families who settled in this country a few years ago for the purpose of catching sea otter, which are of great value, on account of the quality of the fur. They also cultivate the ground to a considerable extent.† Captain Baggshaw

*Tulare or San Joaquin River.

†About the year 1812, the Russian American Fur Company established a post near Bodega on the California coast some distance above San Francisco Bay. This was done without the consent of Spain or of any Spanish official; and the establishment was kept up for nearly thirty years, in spite of oft-repeated protests from Spain and Mexico. Russia, however, never laid claim to any territorial possessions in California by reason of the Company's settlements at Bodega or Ross. The Russians had for many years previous to the establishment of these posts visited the coast of California, from Alaska, for the purpose of catching the sea-otter, which was probably the most valuable of all fur — in fact there was a great deal of poaching by the Americans who visited this coast in trading vessels in the early days.

went and examined the carcase of the whale which our men had found, and pronounced it to be the Sperm whale, the oil of which is of the most valuable kind. He supposed it had been washed here when the sea was rough during a storm, and was unable to make its way back over the sand bars. From him we also learned some further particulars concerning the mountain which had caused us so many hardships in crossing, parts of which was visible from the ocean, particularly the snow covered peaks. This he called the Calafornia mountain, as it runs parallel with the coast for a great distance, commencing at the mouth of the Columbia river, and extending along the coast to the mouth of Red river, or Gulf of Calafornia, forming a beautiful country from the sea shore to the base of the mountain, and extending north and south a distance of about 6 or 700 miles of rich soil, well timbered and abundantly watered by innumerable small streams heading in the mountain and flowing toward the Father of Waters.

Most of this vast waste of territory belongs to the Republic of the United States. What a theme to contemplate its settlement and civilization. Will the jurisdiction of the federal government ever succeed in civilizing the thousands of savages now roaming over these plains, and her hardy freeborn population here plant their homes, build their towns and cities, and say here shall the arts and sciences of civilization take root and flourish? yes, here, even in this remote part of the great west before many years, will these hills and valleys be greeted with the enlivening sound, of the workman's hammer, and the merry whistle of the plough-boy. But this is left undone by the government, and will only be seen when too late to apply the remedy. The Spaniards are making inroads on the South — the Russians are encroaching with impunity along the sea shore to the North, and further North-east the British are

pushing their stations into the very heart of our territory, which, even at this day, more resemble military forts to resist invasion, than trading stations. Our government should be vigilant. She should assert her claim by taking possession of the whole territory as soon as possible — for we have good reason to suppose that the territory *west* of the mountain will some day be equally as important to the nation as that on the *east*.*

The next day Capt. Baggshaw took leave of us and started out on his trading expedition — appointing Monterey as the point where we were to meet in a few days.

The next morning after the departure of the ship, we were all in readiness to start for Monterey, the capitol of the Province, which lays in a southern direction. After travelling a few miles along the coast finding it very difficult in consequence of the wet, swampy ground, we found the carcase of another large fish, measuring 47 feet in length, with a horn or sword projecting from its nose 12½ inches long. As travelling so near the water still continued difficult, we here concluded to strike out into the plain, where we found much better walking, the country being quite level, soil rich, and a few Indians. Some of these natives live well, as they cultivate pumpkins, beans, and some of them Indian corn — they also raise an abundance of melons, which grow to an enormous size. But all these Indians still seemed to be very ignorant and stupid.

On the evening of the 22d November we encamped at

*We are about to see this prophecy of Leonard's fulfilled; events have since transpired, which have made the above possible much more rapidly than Leonard ever dreamed of. The Russians withdrew from the country, and by the war with Mexico the United States secured the whole of California. The settlement of the northwest boundary almost brought about a war between the United States and England; on this issue Polk was elected president of the United States. The campaign cry, "Fifty-four [degrees] forty [minutes] or fight!" referred to the boundary line. It was finally settled by arbitration in which Daniel Webster, one of our representatives, was severely criticised.

some rough hills near a small creek. In this neighborhood there are a great number of these hills, all of which are well covered with excellent timber, and abounding with all kinds of game except buffaloe. The most of our company had become nearly bare footed for want of moccasins, as we had wore out every thing of the kind in travelling from the Rocky mountains — and, as winter was approaching, and no one knowing what kind of a reception we would meet with among the Spaniards, it was advised that we should tarry here and provide ourselves with an abundant winter supply of shoes. Accordingly, our hunters were despatched to scour these hills for the purpose of getting hides to make moccasins, &c., when we would be at leisure. In the evening the hunters all returned to camp, with the tongues of 93 deer and some of the hides, and also of some wild cattle, which are likewise very numerous. They brought the tongues in order to show the number each man had killed. The wild cattle are very timerous, keeping hid pretty much all day and feed at night. They are much wilder than deer, elk, &c. Our hunters brought in some of the choice parts of the cattle they had killed, which was quite fat beef, but it was much inferior to the meat of the buffaloe of the Rocky mountains. These cattle incline much to rough and hilly parts of the country, owing, it is supposed, to the Spaniards and Indians hunting them when found in the plains.

23d. This morning we directed our course across these hills. On arriving at the foot of the hills on the South side, we found one of the horns of these cattle which measured $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet on the outside or bend, and one foot in circumference at the root or thickest part. This we supposed had been the horn of an ox. These cattle are much larger and look better in their wild state than when domesticated. Their horns particularly are much larger than those of our

country — but this is probably owing to the softness of the climate; as here there is no winter nor freezing weather. We continued across the plain and arrived on the banks of a small creek which empties into the sea at the distance of 7 or 8 miles, where we encamped for the night. Not long after we had halted, there was eight Spaniards arrived at our camp, from whom we found it as difficult to get information of any kind, as from most of the Indians. All our efforts to make them understand signs was unavailing, and not one of our company understood a word of Spanish. — They were fine portly looking men, but looked as if they had been cast from civilized society as long as ourselves. They remained with us all night.

24th. We set out this morning for Monterey accompanied by the Spaniards as guides, who piloted us to the house of a Mr. Gibroy,* who had been a brave and dutiful

*This name should be Gilroy. He has an extremely interesting history not only in California, but in connection with the Astor enterprise.

The Northwest Company always looked with jealous eye on the post of the Pacific Fur Company at the mouth of the Columbia; they considered Astor an interloper and a trespasser on their territory, and were only awaiting a good opportunity to gain possession of his post. The opportunity occurred sooner than they had anticipated, and they at once took advantage of it. It was the War of 1812. Much to the detriment of Astor it caused the downfall of his grand undertaking, which certainly deserved a better fate. No sooner had the war been declared than the powerful machinery of the Northwest Company was put in motion, with a view to capturing this post and putting an end to Astor's pretentions in the Northwest. It would then become the property of the Northwest Company. With what success they carried out this scheme is detailed in Irving's *Astoria*. Through the influence of the above company, the frigate "Phoebe," and two sloops-of-war, the "Cherub" and the "Raccoon," having under convoy the "Isaac Todd," were sent to operate upon the Pacific. On board the "Phoebe" was Mr. John M'Donald, a partner in the Northwest Company who was later transferred to the "Raccoon." He had embarked as a passenger, to profit by the anticipated catastrophe at Astoria. We are more particularly interested in the "Raccoon" and "Isaac Todd." The vessels either separated at Rio Janerio, or became separated shortly after leaving this port. The "Raccoon," in command of Captain William Black reached the harbor of San Francisco in February, 1814, after having visited the Columbia River, Black reported that he captured the American fort, that is Astoria; but the Northwest Company had negotiated for the fort before he arrived and the British flag floated over it. He went through with certain formalities, but never received any prize money for his daring adventure. His vessel had, however, been damaged, very probably in crossing the very dangerous bar at the mouth of the Columbia, and he was forced by this accident and the need of fresh supplies to put into San Francisco Bay, where he met the "Isaac Todd." He was kindly treated by Arguello, and beached and repaired his vessel with the aid of the "Todd's" crew. He obtained one thousand pounds of gunpowder and

Tar in his younger days, when he had learned to speak a little English. — From this old man we gathered much useful information as to the country, climate, people, natives, &c. Here we concluded to remain for the night. The old man showed every disposition to give us all the information he could, and treated us very kindly. We ascertained that we were within 35 miles of Monterey. In the morning we started in the direction of Monterey, intending to

other needed supplies, recovering perhaps the deserters lost by the "Todd," and at last sailed for the Sandwich Islands.

The armed merchantman, "Isaac Todd," Captain Frazier Smith, ostensibly bound for Manila for tea, but in reality for the Columbia River, with supplies for the Northwest Company, with a view to the seizure of Fort Astoria, anchored in the Bay of Monterey in January, 1814, and remained a month there and at San Francisco, thence proceeding up the coast. Eight men deserted, *and three others were left at Monterey, to recover from the scurvy. One of these was John Gilroy, the first foreigner to take up his permanent residence in California.* The following is a more complete history of this interesting character:

John Gilroy, a Scotch sailor came to the coast in 1814 as above stated. His real name was John Cameron, but having run away from home as a minor, he changed it to avoid being arrested and sent back. His parents moved to England when John was very young; and indeed he often claimed to be a native of Sunderland, England. In September, 1814, he was baptized at San Carlos (Carmel) by P. Sarria as Juan Antonio Maria Gilroy. In 1818, Captain Guerra at Santa Barbara sent to the viceroy his petition as an "American cooper" for permission to remain and marry in California, which was granted in 1819, and in 1821 he was married at San Juan Bautista Mission to Maria Clara de la Asuncion, daughter of Ignacio Ortega. The same year he accompanied Captain Arguello in his famous expedition to the Columbia as guide or rather interpreter, for American intruders were to be met and talked to. The next we hear of him is in the year in which Leonard made his acquaintance in 1833, when he obtained naturalization, producing certificates that he was a soapmaker and millwright of good character, with wife and four children, having also some live stock on the S. Isidro rancho. This rancho was granted the same year to the Ortegas. Gilroy owned a league of it, on which he built an adobe house and here spent the remainder of his life.

His name appears on Larkin's books from 1834, when his age was given as forty-five. In 1835, he was Aux. Alcalde at "Los Ortegas," by the padron of 1836, age forty, wife age twenty-eight, child. Nicodemus born in 1826, Miguel born in 1828. Age forty-six in 1840. He was not arrested in the Graham affair, afterwards named in the records of most years. Said to have been sent to Fremont's Gavalan camp in 1846. In 1851 for the first time Gilroy wrote to his family in England, to which he received a reply from his brother Alexander Cameron, tanner at Newton Heath, near Manchester, dated June 29, 1852, in which he states he is glad to learn that he has a brother living, as father, mother, and the other brothers are all dead. John Gilroy was an honest, good-natured old sailor-ranchero, well liked by every one, much too fond of his grog and cards, careless and improvident, and as powerless in the hands of land lawyers as were the natives themselves. He lost all his lands and cattle, but lived to see his old rancho the site of a flourishing town, which bears his adopted name, Gilroy, Santa Clara County. He died in 1869 at the age of about seventy-five, as poor as when he landed in California more than a half century before.

Leonard's description of him is in accord with other authorities, but he must have evidently forgotten his English of younger days to some extent. But he was doubtless the same honest, careless, hospitable old tar, more widely known in later years.

pass through the town of St. Juan or John which lay in the course we were going. Here we found the travelling much easier, as we now had some kind of roads to travel on, although they were far from being wagon roads — running through an extensive prairie of rich soil, with here and there a lonely hut built near some grove of timber or brook. Towards evening we arrived at St. Juan,* which we now found to be a Spanish Missionary station for the establishment of the christian religion and civilization among the Indians.

Here Capt. Walker deemed it prudent to halt for a few days, in order to ascertain the disposition of the people, & make further inquiries with respect to the country, &c., lest we might be considered as intruders and treated in a way that we would not much like. It was our desire to keep on peaceable terms with the Spaniards, at least no one desired to give the least offence of any kind — knowing that Spaniards and Indians had quite a different mode of carrying on a warfare. We obtained privilege from the Priests to select a convenient place for grass, wood, water, &c., to pitch our encampment, and immediately commenced erecting a breast work, with which to defend ourselves in case we were attacked by Indians or anything else that chose to molest us.† From information gained here, Capt. Walker thought it advisable to go no further into their country, or the inhabited parts of it, owing to the difficulty in getting pasture for our horses and provisions for ourselves—as there is no preparations of any kind made for the accommodation of travellers; besides the expense of living would be much less to remain here where game was plenty and grass good.

To-day Capt. Walker, after getting a passport, which

*The old mission of San Juan Bautista.

†It is quite evident from this statement of Leonard's that they expected to have trouble with the Spaniards (at this period the Californians or Mexicans were called Spaniards), and they were no doubt preparing to fight for their rights if necessary. J. S. Smith some few years previous had been imprisoned while on one of his trips to California and they probably expected the same treatment.

is necessary for a stranger to have in passing from one ward or district to another, and which must be renewed by the Alcalde or Squire in each district, took two men and started for Monterey, where he intended presenting himself to the Governor, and asking the permission of his Excellency to pass the winter in his settlements, and to inform him where we were from, our business, intensions, &c.

St. Juan or St. John is beautifully situated on the banks of a small creek in a rich level plain, about 20 miles from the coast and about the same distance from Monterey, containing from six to seven hundred inhabitants — all of whom are Indians, with the exception of the Priests and 15 or 20 people, who are occupied in teaching and instructing these heathens in the ways of religion and truth; besides giving them instructions in the art of farming and rendering the soil productive — with the hope that they will eventually succeed in inculcating into the minds of the savages such a knowledge of agriculture as will greatly conduce to the amelioration of the red man's condition. Their habitations are simple in construction — mostly such as may be found in the wildest parts of the mountains. But those of the Missionary establishment are quite different, & plainly show the superiority of the white man over the Indian, both as regards comfort and convenience. This station much resembles a fort or garrison. The part which is called the Church, forms one side or end. The other three sides are divided into different departments like cells, each cell sheltering so many Indians, and covers near half an acre of ground, with the door of each cell opening to the inside. These buildings are the same as if they were under one roof, with the exception of a gate at each corner of the square. The buildings are constructed of brick, the principal part of which are dried in the sun. — The walls are built thick and strong when built of this kind of brick.

For rafters they use poles tolerably well shaped, and for lathing they make use of poles of a smaller size. The roof is generally composed of a kind of cane grass which is carefully laid on the rafters and then covered with earth; for which purpose they generally have the roof nearly flat in order to hold the earth. But the church, or principal building, is built of handsome brick, and is well finished, being covered with tile. For the instruction of these Indians there is four hours of each day devoted to education and prayer, and the balance of the day is occupied in teaching them the rudiments of agriculture and the mechanical arts. The females are carefully instructed in the art of sewing, and other accomplishments of housewifery. Every thing in this station is under the control & management of the Priests, who exercise the authority of Governor, Judge, &c., being privileged to try and condemn all criminal acts.*

*The Missions of California, two of which are very well described by Leonard, San Juan and San Carlos (Carmel), were about passing from the zenith of their prosperity at the time of Leonard's visit; in fact, since Mexican rule had succeeded that of Spain, they were never quite so prosperous. It was indeed a sad day for the Indians or neophytes, as they were called, when they were abolished. From 1810 to 1820, the Indian population had increased ten per cent under the wise and humane management of the Franciscan Fathers — one of the few instances where the native population has increased under the elevating methods of civilization. At these missions the neophytes were regularly fed and properly clothed, and cared for in case of sickness; a certain number of hours were devoted to work and worship and instruction, both in the field and the school, while the women were taught all the duties of the housewife. When we compare the condition of these Indians under the mission system, with their condition under the rule of our own great country we cannot help but feel the pangs of a guilty conscience. There were at the time mentioned about 20,000 natives scattered among the twenty-one missions, making the missions prosperous and the Indians quite contented.

The first mission was established July 16, 1769, at San Diego, by the good old Friar Francisco Junipero Serra (Padre Junipero) under the Franciscan Fathers. There were twenty-one missions, four presidios, and three pueblos, stretching up and down the coast nearly seven hundred miles; they were connected by a roadway known as the King's highway, Royal road, or El Camino Real. This road in places was good and well kept, at others it was only a bridal path; it was the duty of each mission to keep a certain portion in repair, the work of course being done by the natives. There was a movement on foot some years ago to re-establish this old highway. The missions in their order of dedication were as follows:

1.	San Diego de Alcala	Dedicated	July 6, 1769
2.	San Antonio de Padua	"	July 14, 1771
3.	San Carlos de Monterey (El Carmel)	"	Dec. 1, 1771

On the first evening we spent in our new encampment, we were shown the manner in which the Spaniards take wild cattle, which was quite a different practice from that used by the Indians of the Rocky mountains in taking buffaloe, &c. Never less than two goes at a time, who are

4.	San Gabriel Archangel	Dedicated	Nov. 1, 1776
5.	San Louis Obispo de Tolosa	"	Sept. 1, 1772
6.	San Francisco de los Dolores	"	Oct. 9, 1776
7.	San Juan Capistrano	"	Nov. 1, 1776
8.	Santa Clara	"	Jan. 18, 1777
9.	San Buenaventura	"	Mar. 31. 1782
10.	Santa Barbara	"	Dec. 4. 1786
11.	La Purissima Concepcion	"	Dec. 8, 1787
12.	Santa Cruz	"	Dec. 8, 1787
13.	Nuestra Senora de la Soledad	"	Oct. 9, 1791
14.	San José	"	June 11, 1797
15.	SAN JUAN BAUTISTA	"	June 24, 1797
16.	San Miguel	"	July 25, 1797
17.	San Fernando Rey de Espana	"	Sept. 8, 1797
18.	San Louis Rey de Francia	"	June 13, 1798
19.	Santa Ynez Virgin y Martyr	"	Sept. 17, 1804
20.	San Rafael Archangel	"	Dec. 14, 1817
21.	San Francisco de Colano de Sonoma	"	Aug. 25, 1823

THE OLD MISSION OF SAN JUAN BAUTISTA

The mission San Juan Bautista is about ninety miles southeast of San Francisco, the mission buildings were built on the edge of a mesa overlooking a fertile valley. The church faces a little to the southeast. It was 200 x 70 x 45 feet in dimensions, being higher than most of the churches. The walls were supported by four buttresses on either side. Those on the northeast are standing at the present time, one remains at the back; while the entire wall on the west side is boarded up with red wood to prevent its total collapse. The church was built with a nave and transepts. The nave is subdivided by seven arches, but curiously five of them have been walled in with adobe. The walls and ceiling are white-washed. There is a choir-loft over the entrance door. The church is lighted by eight quaint little windows with glass in small panes, about five inches square. The baptismal font, carved from a piece of sandstone, stands three feet

MAP
OF
FRANCISCAN
MISSIONS
IN CALIFORNIA,
1769 - 1824
SACRAMENTO RIVER
SAN JOAQUIN RIVER
COLORADO RIVER
CALIFORNIA
PACIFIC OCEAN
SAN FRANCISCO DE SOLANO DE SONOMA
SAN RAFAEL ARCHANGEL
SAN FRANCISCO DE LOS DOLORES
SANTA CLARA
SAN JOSE
SANTA CRUZ
SAN JUAN BAUTISTA
SAN CARLOS DE MONTEREY (EL CARMEL)
NEUSTRA SENORA DE LA SOLEDAD
SAN ANTONIO DE PADUA
SAN MIGUEL
SAN LUIS OBISPO DE TOLOSA
SANTA YNEZ VIRGIN Y MARTYR
LA PURISSIMA CONCEPTION
SANTA BARBARA
SANTA BUENAVENTURE
SANTA FERNANDO REY DE ESPANA
SAN GABRIEL ARCHANGEL
SAN JUAN CAPISTRANO
SAN LUIS REY DE FRANCIA
SAN DIEGO DE ALCALA
THE M S

always on the back of their fleetest horses, each provided with a strong cord with a noose fixed on one end. When the animal is started they give chase and the rider that overtakes the game first, throws the noose round its

high and three feet across; it is the only font that San Juan Bautista had. Over it hangs an old painting of the baptism of Christ. The church has three altars. The principal altar is dedicated to St. John the Baptist and is very gaudily frescoed and painted. The statues of red-wood, one life-size of St. John and four smaller ones, are executed with rare talent and artistic effect. The fact that they are of our native wood proves that either the Padres or the Indians, or perchance a Mexican, who dwelt at the mission, were more than ordinarily gifted in carving.

Would that there was some one now living who could give up the secrets of the missions. From whence came the paintings, the vestments, the church ornaments, the bells, and who executed the carving, and other decorative work? Some say they came from Mexico, others from Spain, but this is not sufficiently satisfactory to an inquiring mind. In the mission garden stand old pear-trees said to be one hundred years old. The cemetery is full to overflowing. Many of the graves are filled six deep and within the small space of an acre or thereabouts, 4557 bodies have been interred. An old sun-dial in the garden is of interest; it is two and one-half feet high and carved from sandstone. Father Rubio said that the dial was originally intended for San Filipe and is therefore one second too slow for San Juan Bautista. Near the mission is Fremont's Peak, Gavalin Mountain; General Fremont ascended this mountain March 11, 1846, and selecting the tallest tree as a flag-pole, raised thereon the stars and stripes. He constructed a rude fort, and remained encamped at this place for three days. It was to this camp that our sailor-rancher, John Gilroy, was supposed to have been sent by the California authorities, to interview Fremont and learn his plans. It was the first time the United States flag was unfurled in California, but it was done without proper authority. Remains of the fort and the stump of the tree may be seen at the present time.

There are many interesting relics at San Juan church, ancient candlesticks of curious pattern, old musical instruments, the old bass-viol, the rude music stand, a violin, an old pipe-hand-organ brought from England in 1797, made by Benjamin Dobson, 22 Swan St., London, England, in 1735. Vestments, robes and sheet music torn and faded.

The site of San Juan or Popeloutechom as the Indians call it, was selected as early as 1786 but the church of San Juan Bautista was not established until June 24, 1797, the day dedicated to the patron saint, John the Baptist. Work upon the chapel and various buildings was begun immediately. It took hundreds of workers fifteen years to complete the task and the chapel was dedicated by Father President Esteban Tapis, June 25, 1812. The establishment was so constructed as to form a court 200 feet square, with buildings on three sides of it and a high wall on the fourth. The material used was adobe and ladiello, a kind of brick that was frequently used for flooring and was made in a subterranean kiln. Adobes are made of a certain mud mixed with straw or tough grass, being thoroughly kneaded or trodden by foot. It is moulded in the desired shapes and dimensions and dried in the sun; the old regulation size was 30 x 16 x 4 inches, weighing fifty pounds. The ladiellos were much smaller, being only 12 x 8 x 4 inches and after being baked in the kiln were exceedingly hard. The old floor stone remains in San Juan Bautista as well as in many others of the old missions and is over one hundred years old. The chapel had a handsome tower and dome, but after the dome fell a hideous modern steeple was perched upon quaint old San Juan. Even the elements rebelled at this sacrilege, the winds blew and the steeple fell. The buildings were originally roofed with tiles or tejas, kiln-dried like the brick, but in 1884 the church was

neck or horns, and begins to draw the noose tight. When the noose is found to be secure he gives the cord several winds round the pummel of the saddle, (which is made strong for this purpose) and stops his horse all of a sudden, which throws the animal to the ground and frequently breaks its neck. If the animal is thrown without injury, the other hunter comes forward with his noose and fastens it round its hind foot, which enables them to manage the stoutest and most ferocious bulls. Having thus captured their object of pursuit, they sometimes have great trouble

restored, and a portion of the roofing was replaced by shingles until such time as the tiles can be placed upon them. The walls of San Juan were allowed to retain the delicate tint of the cinnibar that so frequently colored the mortar and left the glow that no after tinting or staining can imitate.

The fine music of San Juan Bautista was a feature of the mission, and a reason of its success. The Padres charmed the savages with song and harmony. A chime of nine bells was doubtless a sweet memory to the Padres, of the past, and certainly proved a benefit in attracting and gaining the Indian's attention; only one of these bells remains at the mission. The other bell is one that was recast in San Francisco in 1874, from two of the old ones but the old sweet tone is gone. Many of the bells have been given to other churches. A peculiar feature of the belfry where hang the bells, is an old wooden wheel with four hollow arms, two inches square, on an axle; between each two hangs a wooden clapper and these clappers rap successively on the arms as the wheel rotates. It is used to call the people to worship upon the days when the Catholic Church rings no bells. The wooden wheel can be heard a great distance. The bells and the pipe-organ are features of San Juan Bautista that worked little less than miracles.

It is to be regretted that such interesting old landmarks were neglected and let run to decay without an effort to save them. Here it was that Leonard and his companions spent the winter of 1833-34, and they no doubt found much to interest them, free from the cares and dangers of the mountains. At the time he was there, the missions were in a very flourishing condition, and he gives the daily routine of duty of the mission Indians, and we also learn from him that the good Padres were frequently imposed upon by unscrupulous Indians.

The chapel of San Juan Bautista could accommodate one thousand or more worshippers and in the prosperous days the capacity was frequently taxed to its utmost. The mission in the olden days possessed extensive lands and great herds. Between the years of 1797 and 1835, 4100 persons were baptized. When the crash of secularization came, the inventory showed a valuation of $147,413.

In 1846 San Juan Bautista was sold for debt, today it is an impoverished parish church, but nevertheless one of the most interesting and artistic relics of the old mission establishments.

The large mission visited by Leonard, situated ten miles south of Monterey, near the town of San José (this is an error) was the old mission of San Carlos de Monterey (El Carmel) and was one of the largest and most renowned in California; the church was probably the finest of all the mission churches, besides being one of the first established, being dedicated December 1, 1771. The church ornament was quite pretentious, and at the time of Leonard's visit they had at the mission over 900 neophytes, or Indians; it has however, like the fall of the mighty, gone to decay, its glory having long since departed, much to the detriment of the poor Indian.

in getting them home alive. The one with the cord round the animals head goes before while he with the cord fastened to the hind foot stays in the rear. If their prisoner becomes refractory and refuses to advance, the man in the rear commences whipping, while he in front uses many devices to provoke the brute, until it in a fit of rage makes at him, when he puts off at full speed, and sometimes run two or three miles in this way without stopping. In this manner they brought a large handsome cow into our camp this evening which we purchased, and found to be good beef.

Although they exhibit a great degree of dexterity in taking these wild beasts, their mode of killing them is far different. — When they want to butcher their beef they make the horse with the noose round the neck pull a different way from the one with the noose round the foot, until the animal is thrown on the ground, when they dismount and cut its throat with large knives.

They appear to do most of their work on horse-back. If they want wood they repair to the forest, ride along until they find a log to suit them, when they drop their noose round the end of it; and thus drag it to their homes. They are very expert on horseback, nor could it be otherwise, for they are constantly riding & never appear so well satisfied as when they are seated on a prancing steed.

On the first of December, Capt. Walker returned from Monterey, where he had met with a hospitable reception by the Governor* and principal people in and about the Capitol, and where he also again met with Capt. Baggshaw, who served as an interpretor for Capt. Walker and the Governor, as he was fully capable of fulfilling such an office.

*The Governor here referred to was Figueroa, who had only arrived in California about ten months before Leonard's party, about January, 1833. He was an extremely good friend to the foreigners, treating them kindly, was liberal in his views as well as in policy. This however soon aroused the jealousy of some of the native Californians.

With the Governor, Capt. Walker succeeded in every thing he desired, having obtained permission to remain in the country during the approaching winter, to hunt and kill as much game as would support our company, and to trade as much with the Spaniards as we pleased, but were forbid trapping in the Indian lands or trading with the natives. The Spaniards manifest a warm friendship for the Indians under their jurisdiction, as those who were friendly towards us were constantly reminding us of the danger of wronging the Indians.

Here we remained until about the 18th of December, without anything occurring except the daily visits we received from the Spaniards and Indians, who were curious to know how we lived, and all about us. They however, only found that we lived like they did themselves, any more than they lived in habitations built of wood, brick, mortar, &c. while we lived in huts made of skins of animals. About this time Capt. Walker proposed to me to take a tramp through the settlements for the purpose of taking a view of the country, and the manners and customs of the inhabitants. This was precisely what I had long been wanting. Accordingly, Capt. W., two others and myself left the camp and steered to the south-east, intending to return through Monterey. The country thro' which we passed contained rich soil, tolerably well timbered, but thinly inhabited with a few Spaniards and Indians, who appeared to live there because they were not permitted to live any other place. These people, generally, are very ignorant and much more indolent — have little or no ingenuity — and only seem to enjoy themselves when engaged in the chase. This is the only occupation of the wealthier portion of Spaniards. Their habitations are built of sun-dried brick, some of which appear well enough on the outside, but the inside shows no kind of mechanism—there being no floor,

partition, or work of any kind except the bare walls. Their floors are made smooth by taking a large beetle and hammering the surface of the ground until it becomes perfectly level—thus they never fail of having a solid foundation!—They have a small fire-place in one corner of the house, with a chimney extending only a little above the mantle. Their beds and bedding generally consists of blankets spread upon a large hide layed on the ground, and after rising in the morning these beds are rolled up in one corner, where they answer the purpose of seats through the day time. Their diet is generally composed of beans and meat made into a kind of soup, with but little bread. Most of them are entirely destitute of cooking utensils, and, were it not that they are all provided with knives, their manner of cooking and eating would be equally as inconvenient as the wildest savages of the Rocky mountains. But the wealthy, who, it may be supposed, constitute the aristocracy of this country, appear to live at ease, surrounded with all the comforts of life, are entirely independent and unconnected with the common people. They carry on farming to a considerable extent in some districts, the principal labour of which is done by the Indians from the missionary station. The principal productions are wheat, corn, and beans. They also have many vine-yards, and manufacture a large quantity of wine — which is their principal drink. Their mode of preparing the soil for grain is of an awkward and rather novel nature. When they want to plough, they repair to the woods and get a sapling with a knot or branch jutting out on one side, which they make sharp, hitch two or more teams of oxen to it and then proceed to score out the ground — which is generally done in wet weather, when the ground is moist. Another method, no less novel, however, is to get a crooked log, much the shape of a sled-runner, fix a piece of iron in front which answers for a

coulter, then sharpening the log they make a furrow similar to the track of a sled. As a substitute for a harrow, they use a brush, and by laying a weight on it, some times scratch the ground in tolerable style. This manner of tilling the soil could not be done with such success in any other country where the soil is less mellow and tender than here.

These people have no fences round their cleared or cultivated land, although they raise an immense amount of stock, such as horses, mules and horned cattle—all of which range at large over these extensive prairies all seasons of the year, many being in a manner totally wild, so much so, that when they wish to milk a cow, they mount one of their coarsers and noose her, fasten the cord to a tree, and then tie her feet, when she is forced to be quiet. During our whole stay in this country I have never seen any thing like a stable or a barn, as a shelter for the dumb brutes—nor did I ever see any one feeding an animal, unless it was a favourite cow or horse that was sick. This, however, is not at all singular as any number of animals could subsist, and be in good order all seasons of the year, on these plains, as in many spots the grass is green the whole year round. The months of August, September and October are the least enticing to animals, as it is the warmest and driest season of the year. As soon as August sets in the beasts inhabiting the dry prairies and hills, repair to the low wet ground, where they can get enough to subsist upon until the dry season passes away. The rainy season commences generally in the latter part of October, and continues until the first and sometimes middle of January, when the weather becomes fair and the farmers sow their grain, such as wheat and rye. During this wet weather the animals grow fat, and the inhabitants employ the principal part of this time in catching and domesticating them. This

fair weather generally lasts about two months, or until the first of March, when the rain again descends and continues until about the middle of June — the grain, however, grows & ripens during the wet weather. It then keeps dry for a month or so until the farmers gather their crops — which occupies about a month, when the warm weather sets in; destroying all kinds of vegetation, giving but a poor subsistance to the dumb brutes, and to the country the appearance of an unproductive climate. About the end of the dry season (say about the first of November) the face of nature in this country has more the appearance of spring in the United States than any other part of the year, and, as there is no winter nor freezing weather here it may be said that August, September and October, is their only winter, (to substitute *warm* for *cold*) as, at the end of this period the face of nature assumes a new dress and vegetation shoots forth precisely in the manner that it does in Pennsylvania when the frost leaves the ground in the Spring of the year. The dry season is occupied by the inhabitants in gathering the mules into large droves and driving them off to the market at Santa Fee, a distance of 12 or 1400 miles from this part of the coast, through a wild and desert country.* Here they meet with ready sale at a profitable price from the traders of Missouri, who repair to Santa Fee annually for that purpose. These traders are generally well supplied with merchandize which they exchange at Santa Fee for gold and silver, and with these Calafornian traders for mules and Spanish hides. The price

*As here noted, the Santa Fé market was largely supplied with horses and mules from California. In going to this point they did not follow the Gila and the Rio Grande, which is the most direct route, but was decidedly too dangerous, on account of the hostile Apaches, but followed a route leading northwest from Los Angeles, up the Virgin River, then crossing to and up to the Sevier River, then over the Green and Grand rivers, to where they unite to form the Colorado, thence southeast through the mountains to Santa Fé — thus making an extensive detour to the north. This is the old Los Angeles Santa Fé trail which was years later much used by the Mormons to convey their supplies and goods to the region of Salt Lake, from San Bernardino or Los Angeles.

of a mule at Santa Fee is generally from 6 to $10.—Merchandize is sold at a great advance, particularly silks, jewelry and groceries.

The principal part of their hides are sold to U. S. vessels trading on the coast. When a trading vessel anchors on the coast for the purpose of trading, the news is spread over the whole country like wild fire. The owners of cattle, who are of the wealthier class, collect together all the poorer Spaniards and Indians for the purpose of catching and butchering the cattle, in order to get their hides. This is the commencement of their sporting season. They are all mounted on their fleetest horses, and on these occasions the hunters go in pairs, one provided with a noose and the other with a spear or lance, which is used in cutting the sinews of the animals hind legs after it is noosed, which causes it to fall to the ground, after which they are easily despatched. After they strip off the hides and take out the tallow, and sometimes the choice part of the meat, the remainder of the carcase is left on the ground to be devoured by the wolves. The hides are then stretched out on the ground, and the tallow moulded into large cakes. As a compensation for their labour, the butchers, or hunters, receive one third of all the tallow they can collect. When the vessel is about leaving the coast, the hides and tallow which has been collected, is conveyed to the beach, where the hides are sold at $1.50 a piece, and the tallow at 4 cents per pound.

The greater part of this cargo is paid for in merchandize at high prices, but which is as valuable here as money itself, and much more useful. A vessel loaded with hides and tallow from this coast is of the greatest value, and has afforded an easy path to wealth for many of the American merchants.*

*One of the most interesting books published, which describes the life and times in California about this period, and particularly the coast trade carried on by the Boston ships, as the American vessels

After travelling leisurely along through their country, which still continued thinly inhabited by these people, and passing two small missionary establishments, we arrived at a small town called St. Hose, or St. Joseph, about 10 miles south of Monterey, where we arrived on the 25th of December.* This is also a missionary station, and the largest of any we had yet encountered, containing about 900 Indians, principally from the mountains. This station is constructed and managed similar to that of St. Juan, except the church, which is much larger, and built with a greater display of the arts of civilization. Here we remained for two days, employing our time in watching the proceedings of these Indians in their devotional exercises. The manoeuvres of those who have been lately converted to the christian religion (being of the Catholic faith,) is something very singular, as they at one moment manifest the most unbounded transports of joy, and the next throw themselves into the greatest paroxysm of weeping and lamentation. — We then continued our journey and soon arrived at Monterey, which town is built on a beautiful situation on the south side of Monterey Bay—this Bay being formed by Kings river. This is the Capitol of Upper, or North Calafornia, and under the government of New Mexico. The town is small containing only about 30 or 40 dwelling houses, one church, one calaboose a part of which is used as a house of justice, or in other words, a court house, where the Governor transacts his public busi-

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were called, mostly with the missions for hides and tallow, is that by Richard H. Dana, *Two Years before the Mast.* Dana shipped as a common sailor and was on the coast in 1835, in the ships "Pilgrim" and "Alert."

*Leonard is mistaken as to the location of this mission; the mission St. Hose or St. Joseph or more properly San José, is north of Monterey some distance and not far from the Bay of San Francisco. The mission, about ten miles south of Monterey, was a very prosperous one and had a magnificent church, in which there were some beautiful works of art, which are I think still preserved. The mission of San Carlos del Carmel is no doubt the mission referred to by Leonard.

ness, and a kind of a fort, built in a commanding situation on the edge of the bay, to be used in the defence of the town in case an attack should be made upon it from the sea, containing several pieces of artillery.

This bay is very deep, affording an excellent harbor for any number of vessels. The town has every natural advantage that a seaport could desire; and if a proper spirit of enterprize prevailed among the inhabitants, it might be made to flourish equal to any other town in the dominions of New Mexico. Vessels sailing along the coast of the Pacific to the north, all stop here to take in supplies, as it is the last white settlement they pass, until they reach the Russian dominions of the North-West;* but as the inhabitants raise no grain only what is used for home consumption; the mariner is only enabled to supply his vessel with meat and water.—Besides the advantage the agriculturalist might derive by supplying vessels with provisions, he might be enabled to carry on a large exporting business — as the soil and climate is ever calculated to raise large crops of grain. Another prominent advantage the town of St. Joseph would have, is the facility of internal communication with the Indians now inhabiting the prairies and mountains of the interior, or the white race, who, it may reasonably be expected, will have undisputed dominion over this entire region before long.

As it is at present, there are some men here of considerable wealth, the principal part of which they have acquired by trading with vessels different kinds of peltries, such as Spanish hides, tallow, beaver, sea-otter, bear, deer and elk skins, and also horses and mules. There is also a

*Leonard does not make mention of San Francisco. There was at this point quite a little settlement at this time, as well as the mission Dolores; it was quite a favorite resort for vessels, the harbor being extremely fine and safe, and more or less trade was carried on for many years before their visit. It has been seen that the "Raccoon" and "Isaac Todd" were at this port for supplies and repairs as early as 1814, and these were by no means the first.

brisk trade carried on in this place with the Sandwich Islands, about nine days sail from this port, — and which might be rendered quite lucrative. The most of the vessels, however that put into this bay are on fishing expeditions. The Sperm whale are very numerous in this part of the Pacific ocean — the oil of which affords a profitable reward to all who embark in this dangerous and toilsome business.

On the 29th some of our men arrived in St. Joseph,* with a portion of the peltries we had collected whilst crossing the mountains, and which we exchanged with Capt. Baggshaw for merchandise, such as groceries and ammunition to do us whilst on our return to Missouri the next summer. After concluding our trade with Captain Baggshaw, and spending the last day of the expiring year on land, we all resolved by invitation, to celebrate New-Years day on board the Lagoda, with the Governor and Capt. Baggshaw. The day was spent quite merrily, and the whole company manifested the best possible humor, each one contributing to keep up the sport by telling some mountain adventure or seafaring exploit. In the evening we ended the celebration by returning on shore and taking a few rounds with our rifles — which terminated by conclusively convincing the sailors that if they could beat us in telling "long yarns," we were more than a match for them with the rifle.

On the morning of the 2d of January, 1834, Capt. Baggshaw insisted on us again visiting his vessel, for the purpose of taking a glass, which we gladly accepted, and after shaking hands all round, and affectionately bidding farewell with our friends on board the vessel, returned to land in company with the Governor, when his Excellency

*He here no doubt means Monterey and not St. Joseph, from the fact that the governor visited the ship. San José or St. Joseph is far to the north and at considerable distance from the sea, and San Francisco Bay.

offered our Captain a gratuity of a tract of land seven miles square if he would bring 50 families, composed of different kinds of mechanicks, and settle on it. Capt. Walker was well pleased with the country, and said he had a great mind to accept the Governor's offer, as he had no doubt he could in a few years emass a fortune, and be at the head of a rich and flourishing settlement; but his love for the laws and free institutions of the United States, and his hatred for those of the Spanish Government, deterred him from accepting the Governor's benevolent offer — and we bid farewell to the Governor and his people, well pleased with the reception we had thus far every where met with among the Spaniards.*

We now left St. Joseph and returned with our merchandize, consisting principally of groceries, ammunition, &c., to our encampment, where we arrived without meeting with any difficulty; finding everything in good order, and all well except one man named Philips, who was laying in a very precarious state from wounds inflicted by a bear. It appeared that Philips had been out hunting deer, and having killed one, took out the insides and hung it upon a tree, and started to the camp to get a horse to bring it home. After travelling a mile or so, whilst ascending a hill, came suddenly upon an old bear and two cubs. — The bear immediately on seeing Philips, as is their custom, reared on her hind feet, and being very close, commenced growling most furiously. This our hero could not brook, and fearing the consequences if he should shoot and wound her, lost his presence of mind, and started to run. — The bear immediately pursued and caught him. He now found it quite useless to attempt to get loose, and only saved his

*Ten years later, 1843, Captain Walker acted as guide for a party of emigrants who were going to California. They followed the Oregon trail to near Salt Lake where Walker took charge and conducted them by way of the Humboldt River over much the same route they followed on this trip to California.

life by sinking to the ground and affecting to be dead. The bear then left him, but not without wounding him to such a degree that it was a long time before he could collect strength enough to raise to his feet. It was late at night when he reached the camp, and was so far gone, from hunger & loss of blood, that his life was despaired of at first. One of his arms was broke & his body most shockingly cut and mangled.

On our way from the Capitol to our camp,* we had an opportunity of witnessing a part of the Spanish mode of gambling in this country, which was rare amusement to us, and which they call bull-bating. It is in this fashion, as near as I could understand: When a number of sporting gentlemen get together for this purpose, they repair to the prairies, all well mounted and prepared for the chase. When they come across a herd of cattle they make large bets on who shall be the first to noose one of the cattle in the drove in sight. When every thing is arranged this far, they all take an even start. The one that gets the rope round the animals horn or neck first claims the assistance of the rest to throw the animal to the ground — which ends the chase for this time. As the Spaniards are generally skilled in the art of throwing the noose, the chase in a case of this kind mostly depends on the fleetness of the horses. When they have secured a bull in this way, they take him to a pen made strong for this purpose, where they put him in for safe-keeping, and settle the bets. Having got through with this game, to give the loosers an opportunity to regain their losses, they start out on the hunt of a grizzly bear, always prefering the largest, which they capture in the same way. Taking a bear is a much more dangerous piece of work, than any other animal, owing to their enor-

*This statement makes it perfectly plain that they were at Monterey and not at St. Joseph.

mous strength. It often happens that, in taking a bear, they are unhorsed; when, if alone, they are in imminent danger of being tore to pieces; but this seldom happens unless the horse is thrown, or the saddle tore loose. In taking a bear, their object is to noose him round one of the hind legs, in order to keep him from biting the cord, which they are very apt to do if fast round the neck. A single hunter can do but little with a large bear, and they are seldom attacked single handed, or without the certainty of assistance from some of their comrades. When overtaken by the foremost rider, the bear stops running & prepares for war. This man will then engage the attention of the bear by teasing him, whilst another hunter will come up in the rear of the excited animal and noose him by the hind foot; when the cord is securely fastened to the hind foot, he is generally considered safe. It is then that their sport begins in good earnest, and the feats that are sometimes performed by the men, bear and horses, would be incredible to any person who has never seen any sport of this kind. After the bear finds himself secure and has become pretty well worried, he seats himself sullenly on the ground and lets the horse pull at the cord, stretching his leg out until the pain becomes too severe, when he will draw up his leg, horse and all, with as much apparent ease as a horse would a sleigh. I have been told that some of the largest bears have been known to drag two horses a considerable distance in a fit of rage, in spite of all the exertions of the horses and riders to the contrary. After the bear is pretty well worried in this way, another noose is fastened round one of the fore feet or neck, when the bear will commence beating the ground with his feet and manifesting the most intense rage and anger imaginable—and in this manner they drag, whip and coax him along to the pen where the bull is confined.

Their cords are made of green cow-hide, which they

cut into narrow strips, hang them in the sun and rub them as they dry, making them soft and pliable, when they are platted into a rope which no weight can sever.

When the bear has arrived at the bull pen, their bets on taking him and all disputes are settled, refreshments taken, and preparations made for another scene, which is by far the most pleasing to the Spaniards. They begin to enrage the bull by pricking him with a nail fixed in the end of a stick, and when his anger has rose to the war pitch, the bear is let into the pen with the bull. The men now bet all they are worth on which will be the conquerer, and every thing manifests the greatest possible excitement. Sometimes the animals refuse to fight until they are forced to it by being tormented with the sharpened sticks, but when one receives a blow from the other, nothing can part them until one or the other falls. These fights last sometimes half an hour without relaxation. The bear is much the strongest, but it has no chance of avoiding the thrusts of the bull, in consequence of the smallness of the pen; but in an open field, a grizzly bear will conquer a bull in a few moments.

When the fight is over the conquered animal is taken out and the bets are again settled. If it is the bear that is whipt, the game is continued and the bets renewed on some person who will offer to go into the pen with the enraged bull, lay his hand on some part of his body and escape untouched. This is by far the most dangerous part of the whole play, and many lives have been lost at it; but so fond are the Spaniards of gambling, that in play a life is of but little consequence. When the bets are all arranged, the adventurer stands at the door of the pen with his blanket in his hand, and the company is occupied in maddening the bull,—when he has become sufficiently enraged the hero steps in, when the bull will make a desperate plunge at him with his horns, which the man escapes by

throwing the blanket over the face of the bull and blinding him—he then claps his hand on the designated spot, snatches the blanket off his horns & makes his escape. If he gets out without the bull striking him, he has won the stakes for all those who bet on him—which will be a profitable business for him, as he receives a certain per centage on all the money thus won.

It happened that one of these games was to be played while we were in the neighborhood, and on being invited to attend Capt. Walker, several others, and myself concluded on going to see the performance. When we reached the ground the Spaniards had the bull and the bear both secured, and were just going to set them to fighting. Presently the animals got to blows, and continued for a short time, when the bull became master and the bear was let out of the pen. The battle was very closely contested, and I never seen animals so much enraged, and fight with so much fierceness. The bear could master the bull for a good spell, when it could get its arms around him, but the large body of the bull would prevent any serious injury, and presently the bear would be shaken to the ground, when the bull would have a chance to plunge at him with effect. It was in this manner that the bull managed to get the advantage of bruin.—After the bear was taken out, the company commenced betting on an old timeworn Spaniard who offered to go into the pen and touch the enraged animal. In a short time all the preliminaries were arranged, and the man entered the pen in the manner as described above, but unfortunately, when he went to pull his blanket off the animals head and come out, one of the beasts horns was thrust quite thro' his thigh. As soon as this happened, the Spaniards commenced plagueing the bull at the opposite side of the pen and the wounded man was suffered to crawl out in the best manner he could.

There are also many other methods of gambling practised by these people, — and vice of every description seems to be openly countenanced in some parts of the settlements, such as horse racing, card playing, and even stealing. The latter of which is carried on to a considerable extent by both male and female, and is even recognized, under some circumstances, as one of the established customs of the country. The men are always provided with dirks, which they can use with superior skill.

We remained at our old encampment near St. Juan, without meeting with any thing to disturb our situation, and on the most friendly intercourse with both Spaniards and Indians, until last night, when six of our best horses were stolen, and which we at first supposed to be the work of Indians. We had heretofore trusted every thing in the fidelity of both the Spaniards and Indians, but when our horses had been thus taken from us we began to keep a sharp look out. In the morning (10th) several scouting parties were despatched on search of the stolen property, and returned in the evening with only one, after following the trail far into the Spanish settlement, which convinced us immediately that it was not the Indians but the Spaniards who had behaved so dishonorable. In the following morning Captain Walker went himself to one of the Alcaldes or Esquires for the purpose of enquiring what steps had best be taken to restore our stolen property, or how we could be recompensed. On having an interview with the magistrate he learned a good many things more than he had formerly known — which was this, that Spaniards, whilst travelling through the country with a poor horse, was at liberty to take a good one if he could find such, no matter who it belonged to, or whether wild or tame, and continue his journey. And also, if two men set down to play at cards, and the looser thinks that his opponent has cheated

or defrauded him, he is at liberty to visit his horses and help himself to such as he can, but if the owner catches him in the act, it generally ends in bloodshed. — For this and other reasons, a Spaniard is never seen away from home without his rope or cord, in order to noose any thing he stands in need of.

Stealing horses is practised more than any other kind of theft, and it is not recognized as a crime, owing, probably, to the cheapness of these animals—as they can be bought at any time for from one to ten dollars. Those costing $1 are unbroke fillies, and those for $10 are first rate horses well tamed. When we became aware that such was the practice of the country, Capt. Walker thought it would be the best plan for us to pack up and leave the neighborhood, in order to avoid a difficulty with a people of a ferocious and wicked nature, at a time too, when we were not very well prepared to contend against such an enemy in their own country. Accordingly we set about purchasing provision, and the next day we were pretty well supplied with flour, corn, beans, &c.

13th. This morning every thing was prepared and we took up our march in an eastern direction. We only travelled 12 or 15 miles this day and encamped for the night, which we spent without the occurrence of any thing of importance more than the recalling to mind of the scenes encountered and hardships endured by each of us in our way-faring to this remote corner of the world.

The two following days we continued without interruption in the same direction, and encamped on the banks of a beautiful stream called Sulphur river, where we concluded to remain until in the Spring, when it would be more pleasant travelling eastward to the Rocky mountains. Our encampment is beautifully located on a rising piece of ground, with a handsome river gliding smoothly along

immediately in front, an extensive oat plain stretching out as far as the eye will reach to the rear, and is about 40 miles east of St. Juan.—The banks of this river are most delightfully shaded with timber, principally oak and elm. The soil in the plain is very strong and deep, producing heavy crops of wild oats and grass — affording excellent pasture for horses, at this season of the year.

After we had made every arrangement necessary to our comfort while we remained here, our men commenced hunting in good style—bear, elk and deer being very plenty, and the fattest we had anywhere met with. On the 20th, it being a fine day for hunting, a large portion of our sportsmen set out early in the morning bound for a general hunt, and determined to rake the whole prairie. Towards the middle of the day, two of the men came in sight of a large drove of elk, feeding in the open prairie, and as they were cautiously approaching near enough to shoot, they unexpectedly came upon five grizzly bear that were sleeping in the grass — two old ones and three cubs; the latter began to howl most piteously, which enraged the old ones, and they made at our hunters with open mouth. But as one of them was an old practitioner in such matters, having a good gun, carrying an ounce ball, which he called "*Knock-him-stiff,*" stood quite composed (bidding his companion, who was about to run, to stand his ground) until the bear came within reach of him when he discharged it with the muzzle in her mouth — which, as our hero said, gave her a very bad cough. This inspired the other hunter with courage, and he treated the other bear in nearly the same manner. The cubs not showing any desire to depart alone, were also killed. This days hunt was exceedingly lucky, not only to these two men, but to nearly all who were out, as they all returned with heavy loads of game.

On the 25th Capt. Walker started to Monterey with

eight men for the purpose of laying in a larger supply of provision for us on our journey to the east, in the spring, as we began to reflect that we might fall in with some other companies on the road who would need assistance.

26th. To-day about 10 o'clock, we discovered a large drove of horses passing through the plain, followed by a few people, whom we supposed to be Spaniards or Indians— but they did not appear to know that we were in the neighborhood, & we were not anxious to let them know it for fear they might *travel* our way some time. In the evening, as some of our men who had been out hunting, were returning home, they accidentally came across a large bear laying in a hole, sound asleep. Our men were anxious to see some sport, and commenced making a noise, and even fired a gun or two without bringing her to her senses, and getting her out of the hole. They then dismounted, stationed themselves around the hole and shot her before she moved. On examination, they found her to be of the grizzly species and of the largest size; and also having two young ones in the hole with her, not larger than a common sized cat. The old one was extremely fat, and from the signs about the hole, it appeared that she must have had this as a permanent place of residence. It it the first instance I ever knew of taking a bear of this size whilst asleep.

28th. To-day a party of Spaniards arrived at our encampment on search of a party of Indians who had eloped from the St. Juan Missionary station, and taken with them 300 head of horses — which we supposed to be the party seen by us on the 26th. These men stayed with us all night and the next morning some of our men joined the Spaniards in the chase, who were to get one half of the horses as a compensation for their trouble, if lucky enough to find them. These men followed the Indians to the foot of a

large mountain, where they discovered several smokes rising out of the forest along the base of the mountain. In a thicket of timber, from the smoke that arose, they thought the whole Indian force was concentrated, and the Spanish and American force surrounded the spot in battle array, determined to give the offenders a severe chastisement at once. When all the preparations were made, the word to fire was given. But instead of the lamentations of wounded Indians, and the frantic prancing of frightened horses, nothing but a dead silence answered the discharge of their artillery. — They then dismounted and went into the thicket, where they found a large portion of their horses well butchered, and partly dried and a few old and feeble Indians, with some squaws and children. The Indians having killed some of the horses, were engaged in drying the meat, — but on seeing the white men approach, fled to the mountain, leaving nothing behind but what is above stated. The disappointment of the Spaniards now exceeded all bounds, and gave our men some evidence of the depravity of the Spanish character. By way of revenge, after they found that there was no use in following the Indians into the mountain, the Spaniards fell to massacreing, indiscriminately, those helpless creatures who were found in the wigwams with the meat, and cutting off their ears. Some of them were driven into a wigwam, when the door was barricaded, and a large quantity of combustible matter thrown on and around the hut, for the purpose of setting fire to it, and burning them all together. This barbarous treatment our men would not permit and they went and released the prisoners, when the Spaniards fell to work and despatched them as if they were dogs. When this tragedy was completed they all returned to our encampment on the 31st.

On their arrival at our camp, the Spaniards told me that their object in taking off the ears, was to show the

Priests and Alcaldes, that they had used every effort to regain the stolen property. These people also informed me that the Indians of this country are in the habit of coming in large droves to the missionary stations, & make the most sincere professions of religion, until they gain the confidence of the priests, when they will suddenly decamp, and take off all the horses they can get, to the mountain, where they remain as long as their meat lasts — when they will send another detachment, whose duty it is to do likewise. They prefer eating domesticated horses because the act of stealing them gives their flesh a superior flavour — and it would be less trouble for them to catch wild horses, if they could thus gratify their stealing propensities.

There is supposed to be about ten Indians to one white man, or Spaniard, in this country. The population is divided or classed into three degrees. 1st. The whites or Spaniards. 2nd. The Indians; & third the offspring of a white and an Indian.* — The seasons are distinguished only as *wet* and *dry*—there being no snow and very little frost. The only established religion is that of the Roman Catholic faith, which is professed by almost every Spaniard.

To-day Capt. Walker returned from the settlements well supplied with such articles as he was in need of — bringing with him 100 horses, 47 cow cattle, and 30 or

*In 1830, there were in California about one hundred and fifty foreigners, a great many of whom were English speaking people, and when Leonard was there they probably had over two hundred, so that they were not so scarce as Leonard would lead up to suppose. Alfred Robinson, a native of Boston, resident agent for Bryant & Sturgis, owners of the "Lagoda," Captain Bradshaw, was at this time living at Santa Barbara; he was a close student of California affairs and wrote an excellent work of his life and experiences in California. He gives the population of Monterey about the year 1830 as nearly 1000, while in and about the town there were quite a number of English speaking foreigners. He traveled up and down the coast, visiting the various missions, purchasing their hides and tallow. In 1829, he gathered about 3,000 otter-skins on his own account and shipped them to China, the best of which were worth sixty dollars apiece. He married a native of California, and made it his permanent home. A great many of these early settlers were mountain men such as Leonard.

35 dogs, together with some flour, corn, beans, &c., suitable for our subsistance in the long journey, for which every man was now busily engaged in making preparations. Two or three days after Captain Walker returned from this expedition, we were visited by 40 or 50 Spaniards, all well mounted, and each man prepared with a noose, on their way into the neighborhood of wild horses, for the purpose of catching some. In this company we found one of the horses which had been stolen from us before we left the settlement. — The Spaniards honorably gave him up after we proved our claim. As the manner of taking wild horses was altogether a curiosity to me, I was anxious to see the sport, and accordingly several others and myself joined the Spaniards and accompanied them. After travelling a short distance we arrived at a large pen, enclosing about three-fourths of an acre, which they call a park or correll. This pen is built quite strong, to prevent horses from breaking through. Attached to this pen, are two wings extending to the right and left, in the shape of a V, upwards of a mile & a half in length. The wings are made by posts being set in the ground and poles tied to them with a piece of elk or horse hide, about four feet high — the neck or pen being built much higher and stronger. This pen appears as if it had been used for this purpose many years. After we halted here, the Spaniards were occupied during the remainder of the day in repairing some weak parts of the pen and wings, and in the morning all hands proceeded to drive in the horses, which was done by sending out parties in different directions, mounted upon the swiftest horses in order to outrun the wild ones and turn them in front of the pen, when the men all collect in a breast and drive them down into the pen; which answers the same purpose as a basket does a fish-dam. When the animals are all in the pen, a fence is erected across the neck to prevent the escape of

any horses. The men will then dismount and pass along close to the pen for the purpose of accustoming the horses to the smell of human beings. When this is done, four or five will enter the pen, leaving the balance on the outside to prevent them from breaking out, and with their cords noose and tie all under two or three years old. After securing 70 or 80 in this manner, all over this age were turned out,—as they are considered too hard to tame. They then blind-folded those they had taken & turned them loose with the tame horses, and they followed the same as a dog. It is in this way they always get them into the settlements, where they are divided to each man, who brands and hobbles them, and then turns them loose upon the prairie. After they have been confined in this situation two or three days, they are considered domesticated, their fetters taken off, and treated similar to the other horses.

There is another way of catching these horses, which is this: They are noosed, thrown to the ground, partly blind-folded and saddled, when some adventurous Spaniard will mount on his back, let the horse rise to his feet, and if he becomes unmanageable, they give him the whip, and run the brute until he is no longer able to keep his feet under him, after which he is generally sufficiently docile.

On the 12th we returned to our camp, when Capt. Walker traded with the Spaniards for several of these horses — and in the evening they bid us farewell and continued their homeward journey.

Feb. 14th. This morning had been appointed for our departure, and accordingly every thing requisite for our comfort was in readiness, and we lazily left our camp for the east — leaving six of our company behind, all of whom are tradesmen, such as carpenters, hatters, &c. where they purposed following their occupations, which will no doubt be profitable to themselves, and of

great advantage to the indolent and stupid Spaniard.* The price of furniture here is exceedingly high. A rough table (more like a bench,) consisting of rough hewn boards nailed together, will cost 8 and 10 dollars. A pair of similar made bedsteads the same. Two of our men constructed a wind-mill which they sold for $110. All kinds of mechanical productions command a corresponding price. — This is partly owing to the inconvenience of getting out the stuff — there being no saw-mills in the country, the carpenter is compelled to cut out his stuff by hand; and as there are very few tools in the country, it requires great labour to manufacture a piece of work with any kind of taste.

The parting scene between the company and these six men appeared the most melancholy separation we had undergone since we left the States. On other occasions, when we had separated with a portion of our hunters, it was with the confident hope of meeting again. But these men remained with the determination of making a permanent residence in the country, and never again returning to the states; whilst the most of us were as determinedly bent on never again returning to this region — hence we parted as if we were forever afterwards to be separated by worlds. On shaking hands with these men, with whom I had been in

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*It would be a great satisfaction to know the names of the men who were to remain in California, and while some of them remained here at least for a time, they soon tired and sought adventure elsewhere. George Nidever and John Price are the only members of the company known to have remained in California, though Frazer and Moz were probably of this party. Several other men known to have arrived in 1833 may have belonged to it. Bancroft says of this Walker expedition, "Though somewhat strangely their presence there has left but slight traces in the archives."

A writer in the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* of June 14, 1873, names John Nidever, John Hoarde, Thos. Bond, Daily, Captain Merritt, William Ware, and Francois Lajeunesse, as having come with Captain Walker.

We do not know positively who they were and probably never will. Both Nidever and Meek were living as late as 1880, and Bancroft interviewed Nidever as to this journey, and the latter has an account of it in manuscript. It is to be regretted that he did not settle this point, by giving the names of those who were left to follow their vocations in California.

daily intercourse for the last eighteen months,* it appeared more like parting with brothers, than anything else.

Our company was now reduced to 52 men,† 315 horses — and for provisions, 47 beef, and 30 dogs, together with a considerable portion of flour, Indian corn, beans, some groceries and a few other articles necessary on such an expedition. We continued up Sulphur River in an eastern direction, and for the first night encamped on the South side of this stream, after travelling not more than 12 or 15 miles.

15th. Continued our journey up Sulphur river, passing through a fine country, most of which is prairie, covered plentifully with wild oats and grass. After we had encamped this evening, two Spaniards came to our camp bringing with them 25 very fine horses, which they sold to the company, and engaged themselves to accompany us to the buffaloe country. They informed us that they had deserted from the Spanish army, and that as it was the second time, if taken now, according to the Spanish military discipline, their punishment would be certain death.‡

We continued travelling from day to day, the country all the way being of the most enticing nature, soil very strong, timber tolerably plenty, and game in abundance. The two Spaniards we found to be of great advantage to us, as some of our horses caused us great trouble, and one of the Spaniards being an excellent rider and well

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*According to this statement some of the men who were to remain in California had been associated with Leonard long before the starting out of the Walker expedition, as it was only a little over six months since they left the rendezvous at Green River. They were no doubt some of the fifteen free trappers of Sinclair, who was killed at Pierre's Hole, and the fact that Nidever was one of them makes this altogether likely.

†The number of the men in the Walker expedition as here given with those who were to remain was fifty-eight. Bonneville states there were but forty. Meek says that he and his companions joined the party on Bear River, and possibly others may have joined them, thus making the number as Leonard states it. Meek who is inclined to exaggeration says that there were 118; Nidever, 35 to 40.

‡This is the manner in which the two Mexicans came to join the company, of whom we shall have occasion to speak elsewhere.

acquainted with the art of noosing, would catch and bring together our horses at any time they would become separated.

About the 27th we arrived at the base of the Calafornia mountain, having past many Indians on our way, and also finding many here.

On the 28th we continued our journey to the south along the base of the mountain in search of pasture for our cattle and a convenient pass over the mountain. — Here game is very scarce, owing to the numerous swarms of Indians scattered along in every direction. On the second of March we killed one of our beef. Pursued our course, still in a southern direction finding game rather scarce, Indians plenty, pasture improving, and vegetation of every description beginning to grow rapidly — weather showery with warm sun, until the 10th of March, when we arrived at 60 or 70 huts, containing from 250 to 300 Indians. These Indians appear quite different from those more convenient to the Spanish settlements, and call themselves Pagans,* their chief Capetaine, and have names for several things nearly the same as we have. Their wives they call wifa, — kettle, wood, and meat the same as we do. These people seem to live poor, and are equally as indolent as any of those we had met with in the Spanish dominions. They are generally small in stature, complexion quite dark, and some quite hairy. Whilst here we killed another of our beef, and made a present of some of the beef, together with a dog and some tobacco, to these Indians. Their principal diet during this season of the year, consists of roots and weeds, amongst which is parsly, and a kind of cabbage, all of which they eat raw. In the summer they subsist principally upon acorns, at least a person would so judge to

*We are unable to find the tribe here given by Leonard — Pagans, or any name similar — among the California Indians.

see the number of holes that are burnt into the logs for the purpose of mashing them.

When we were about leaving these Indians, their chief brought a hearty and good-looking young female to our Captain and proposed to give her in exchange for an ox. Capt. Walker very prudently declined the offer, telling the chief that we had a great distance to travel, and would probably be without meat half the time. We travelled along quite comfortably meeting with no unusual occurrence. The country through which we passed still continued as charming as the heart of man could desire. The Indians were quite numerous, some of whom would at times manifest the most unbounded alarm. We also passed a great number of streams flowing out of the mountain, and stretching afar towards the Pacific. The prairies were most beautifully decorated with flowers and vegetation, interspersed with splendid groves of timber along the banks of the rivers,— giving a most romantic appearance to the whole face of nature.

We at length arrived at an Indian village, the inhabitants of which seemed to be greatly alarmed on seeing us, and they immediately commenced gathering up their food and gathering in their horses — but as soon as they discovered that we were white people, they became perfectly reconciled. After we halted here we found that these people could talk the Spanish language, which we thought might be of great advantage to the company, and on inquiry ascertained that they were a tribe called the Concoas,* which tribe some eight or ten years since resided in the Spanish settlements at the missionary station near St. Barbara, on the coast, where they rebelled against the authority of the country, robbed the church of all its golden images & candle-sticks, and one of the Priests of several

*We are unable to locate among the California Indians any tribe of this name.

thousand dollars in gold and silver, when they retreated to the spot where we found them — being at least five or six hundred miles distant from the nearest Spanish settlement. This tribe are well acquainted with the rules of bartering for goods or any thing they wish to buy — much more so than any other tribe we met with. They make regular visits to such posts where they are unknown, and also make appointments with ship-traders to meet at some designated time and place; thus they are enabled to carry on a considerable degree of commerce. They still retain several of the images which they pilfered from the church — the greater part of which is the property of the chiefs. — These people are seven or eight hundred strong, their houses are constructed of poles and covered with grass, and are tolerably well supplied with house-hold furniture which they brought with them at the time they robbed the church. They follow agricultural pursuits to some extent, raising very good crops of corn, pumpkins, melons, &c. All the out-door labour is done by the females. They are also in the habit of making regular visits to the settlements for the purpose of stealing horses, which they kill and eat.

We passed one night with these Indians, during which time they informed us of an accessible passage over the mountain. In the morning we resumed our journey, hiring two of these Indians as pilots, to go with us across the mountain—continued all day without any interruption, and in the evening encamped at the foot of the passover.

In the morning we continued up the mountain in an eastern direction, and encamped this evening at the lower end of the snow. The next day we found the snow more plenty, and encamped without grass of any kind. We now began to apprehend hard times again. Our horses no longer resumed their march in the mornings with a playful cheerfulness, but would stumble along and go just

when their riders would force them to do so. We continued travelling in this way for four days when we landed safely on the opposite side of the mountain, in a temperate climate, and among tolerable pasture, which latter was equally as gratifying to our horses as the former was to the men.*

We here made our pilots presents of a horse, some tobacco, and many trifling trinkets captivating to the eye of an Indian, when they left us to return to their friends.

Our horses and cattle were pretty much fatigued, but not as much as we anticipated. The country on this side is much inferior to that on the opposite side — the soil being thin and rather sandy, producing but little grass, which was very discouraging to our stock, as they now stood in great want of strong feed. On the opposite side vegetation had been growing for several weeks — on this side, it has not started yet.

*The route followed by them on their return thus far is not very clear. They left the encampment at San Juan, Jan. 13, and traveled in an easterly direction for about two days when they arrived at Sulphur River, about forty miles east of San Juan, where they determined to remain until spring. I am unable to locate Sulphur River. Going forty miles east from San Juan mission brings one in the neighborhood of the San Joaquin; it may have been a branch of this river or the river itself to which they gave this name. They continued up this river, and must at any rate have been in the San Joaquin valley. They evidently did not follow this river very far, but left it and traveled in an easterly direction to the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada, or California Mountains. They had in mind the hardships endured on their westward passage, and continued in a southeastern direction along the base of the mountains, intending to cross where the Los Angeles-Santa Fé or old Spanish trail crosses, unless they found a convenient pass before reaching this point. They must have continued in this direction for some distance, and may have reached the headwaters of Kern River. In about this locality they discovered the pass as here mentioned and employed the Indians to guide them through. They crossed the mountain near Owen's Lake by what has since been known as Walker's Pass. It must have been quite an easy passage compared with that of the outward journey from Leonard's description. He does not make mention of Owen's Lake which he no doubt must have seen. They then continued some distance up Owen's River, until they tried to make the cut-off which almost proved disastrous to themselves and quite so to their stock. After their return to the eastern foothills they continued in a northern direction until they reached their outward bound trail, which they followed to the headwaters of the Humboldt and on account of their supplies running low they crossed over to the Snake River not far off. Leonard must have been somewhat familiar with this country because he had been here in the fall of 1832 with Milton Sublette and Wyeth. They then continued on to Bear River which was the appointed rendezvous to meet Captain Bonneville and Cerré.

After discharging our pilots we travelled a few miles and encamped at some beautiful springs, where we concluded to spend the remainder of the day, in order to give our horses and cattle rest. Our Capt. here concluded on following the base of the mountain to the north until we would come to our trail when crossing to the west, or Calafornia.

May 2nd.* This morning we resumed our journey, every man possessed of doubtful apprehensions as to the result of this determination, as the hardships which we encountered in this region on a former occasion, were yet fresh in the minds of many of us. The country we found to be very poor, and almost entirely destitute of grass. We continued through this poor country travelling a few miles every day, or as far as the weakened state of our dumb brutes would admit of. The weather was mostly clear and otherwise beautiful, but we had quite a cold wind most all the time. Travelling along the eastern base of this (Calafornia) mountain, we crossed many small rivers flowing towards the east, but emptying into lakes scattered through the plain, or desert, where the water sinks and is exhausted in the earth. This plain extends from here to the Rocky mountains, being an almost uninterrupted level, the surface of which is covered with dry, loose sand.

In this manner we travelled along, passing such scenes as are described above, until at length we arrived at some springs which presented a really remarkable appearance, and may be called boiling, or more properly Steam Springs, situated near the base of the mountain, on or near the banks of a small river. These springs are three in number, and rise within a short distance of each other, one being much

*Here again Leonard is at fault in his dates; the last date given is the 10th of March, and it is scarcely possible they could have spent the time up to the date here given in going this distance. There is no record of their making any stops to take up much of this time. The error is probably in the March date.

larger than the other two. The water constantly boils as if it was in a kettle over a fire, and is so hot that if a piece of meat is put under the water at the fountain-head, it will cook in a few minutes, emitting a strong sulphurous smell — the water also tastes of sulphur. In a clear morning the steam or smoke rising from these springs may be seen a great distance as it hangs in the air over the springs, similar to a dense sheet of fog. There is not a spear of vegetation growing within several rods of the spot, and the surface of the ground presents the appearance of one solid piece of crust, or hard baked mud. When the water empties in and mixes with the river water, it leaves an oily substance floating on the surface similar to tar or greace of any kind.

About the 25th of May, we again continued our journey, but our difficulties had been multiplying for some time, until now we found them quite formidable. — The principal part of our present difficulties arose from the scarcity of pasture for our horses and cattle. After travelling the best way we could, for a few days towards the North, we arrived at another beautiful sandy plain, or desert, stretching out to the east far beyond the reach of the eye, as level as the becalmed surface of a lake. We occasionally found the traces of Indians, but as yet, we have not been able to gain an audiance with any of them, as they flee to the mountain as soon as we approach. Game being very scarce, and our cattle poor, gives us very indifferent living.

Our direct course, after reaching the eastern base of this mountain, would have been a north-east direction, but we were apprehensive of perishing for water in crossing this extensive desert — which would doubtless be the fate of any traveller who would undertake it, when it is recollected that it extends from the base of the Rocky

mountains to this mountain, a distance of several hundred miles. This being the case we were obliged to pass along the base of the mountain in a northern direction, until we would arrive at the point where we ascended the mountain when going to the coast, and then follow the same trail east towards the Rocky mountains, or Great Salt Lake, where we expected to meet the company we had left at the latter place. Travelling along the mountain foot, crossing one stream after another, was any thing but pleasant. Day after day we travelled in the hope each day of arriving at the desired point when we would strike off in a homeward direction. Every now and then some of the company would see a high peak or promontory, which he would think was seen by the company on a former occasion, but when we would draw near to it our pleasing anticipations would be turned into despondency; and at one time, about the middle of May, our Captain was so certain that he could see a point in the distance, which he had distinctly marked as a guide on our former tramp, that he ordered the men to prepare for leaving the mountain; — this also proved to be the result of imagination only.

The next morning our Captain, thinking the desert not very wide at this point, decided on striking across in a north-eastern direction, which would shorten our route considerably, if we could only be so successful as to surmount the difficulties of travelling through loose sand, without water, (as the streams descending from the mountain into the plain all sink.)

On the 16th of May, every thing necessary for our dry tramp being in readiness, we started across the plain, which was done with a willing heart by almost every man, as we were all anxious to get home, and had been travelling many days without getting any nearer. The travelling in the plain, after passing the termination of the streams, we

found to be extremely laborious. The sand lays quite loose, and as the wind would blow whilst driving our horses and cattle ahead of us, the sand would be raised up in such clouds that we could scarcely see them, which was very painful to our eyes. The first night in the plain we encamped at a large hole or well dug deep in the ground, which we supposed to be the work of Indians, and in which we found a small portion of stagnant water, but not half enough to slake the thirst of our numerous herd.

The next morning we resumed our toilsome march at an early hour, finding our stock suffering greatly for the want of water. This day we travelled with as much speed as possible, with the hope of finding water whereat to encamp; but at length night arrived, and the fatigues of the day obliged us to encamp without water, wood or grass. The day had been excessively warm, except when the wind would blow, and in the afternoon two of our dogs died for want of water. On examination we found that the feet of many of our dumb brutes were completely crippled by the sand.

Our situation at present seemed very critical. A dull, gloomy aspect appeared to darken the countenance of every member of the company. We were now completely surrounded with the most aggravating perplexities — having travelled two long day's journey into the plain and no idea how far yet to its termination, and from the manifestations of many of our most valuable stock, we were well convinced they could not endure these hardships much longer. To add vexation to our present difficulties, a violent altercation took place between the men as to whether we would proceed in our present direction, or turn back to the mountain.—A majority of the men were in favour of the latter, but Capt. Walker, who never done any thing by halves, with a few others, were of the opinion that we were

half way across, and could as easily proceed as return. On all such disputes, on all former occasions, the majority decided on what steps should be taken; but when our Captain was in the minority, and being beloved by the whole company, and being a man also who was seldom mistaken in any thing he undertook, the men were very reluctant in going contrary to his will. The dispute created much confusion in our ranks; but fortunately, about midnight the Captain yielded to the wishes of his men, and as it was cool, and more pleasant travelling than in the day time, we started back towards the mountain, intending to follow the same trail, in order to come to the hole at which we encamped on the first night in the plain.

Previous to starting, we took the hides off our dead cattle and made a kind of moccasin for such of our beasts as were lame, which we found to be of great advantage, as it effectually shielded their feet from the scouring effects of the sand.

Nothing happened through the night, and we moved carelessly along our trail, as we thought; but our feelings cannot be described at daylight when no signs of our former tracks could be discovered. Men were despatched in every direction on search, but all returned without any tidings with which to comfort our desponding company. The compass told which direction we should go, but otherwise we were completely bewildered. Our horses, cattle and dogs were almost exhausted this morning. The pitiful lamentations of our dogs were sufficient to melt the hardest heart. The dumb brutes suffered more for water than food, and these dogs, when death threatened to seize them, would approach the men, look them right in the face with the countenances of a distracted person, and if no help could be afforded, would commence a piteous and lamentable howl, drop down and expire. When the day

became warm we slackened our pace, and moved slowly forward, but without any hope of meeting with any water at least for a day longer. When night came we halted for a short time in order to collect the men and animals together, which were scattered in every direction for a mile in width, lest we should get separated at night, as we intended to travel on without ceasing until we would find water or arrive at the mountain.

When our forces collected together, we presented a really forlorn spectacle. At no time, either while crossing the Rocky or Calafornia mountains, did our situation appear so desperate. We had to keep our dumb brutes constantly moving about on their feet, for if they would once lay down it would be impossible to get them up again, and we would then be compelled to leave them. Nor were the men in a much better condition. It is true, we had food, but our thirst far exceeded any description. At last it became so intense, that whenever one of our cattle or horses would die the men would immediately catch the blood and greedily swallow it down.

When our men had collected together, and rested their wearied limbs a little, our journey was resumed, finding that the cattle and horses travelled much better at night than in daylight. We advanced rapidly this evening without any interruption, until about midnight, when our horses became unmanageable, and contrary to our utmost exertions would go in a more northern direction than we desired. After several ineffectual attempts to check them, we thought perhaps it would be well enough to follow wherever they would lead. We had not followed our horses far until we discovered, to our indescribable joy, that the instinct of our horses was far more extensive and more valuable than all the foresight of the men, as we, unawares, came suddenly upon a beautiful stream of fresh water.

We now had the greatest trouble to keep our beasts from killing themselves drinking water — in which we succeeded only in part, and were thus occupied until daylight, when we counted our force for the purpose of ascertaining how much loss we sustained by undertaking to cross the desert, and found that we had lost 64 horses, 10 cows, and 15 dogs.

In order to get something to eat for our stock, and also to keep them from drinking too much water, we left this stream which had afforded such delight, before either the men or beasts had time to repose their wearied limbs. After travelling a few miles this morning we had the good luck to come across tolerable pasture and plenty of wood and water. Here we determined on staying until the next morning, for the purpose of resting our wearied stock.

This desert which had presented such an insurmountable barrier to our route, is bounded on the east by the Rocky mountains, on the west by the Calafornia mountain, on the North by the Columbia river, and on the south by the Red, or Colorado river. These two mighty rivers rise in the Rocky mountains adjacent to each other, and as the former flows in a N. W. and the latter in a southern direction, forms this plain in the shape of the letter A. — There are numerous small rivers rising in either mountain, winding their way far towards the centre of the plain, where they are emptied into lakes or reservoirs, and the water sinks in the sand. Further to the North where the sand is not so deep and loose, the streams rising in the *spurs* of the Rocky and those descending from the Calafornia mountains, flow on until their waters at length mingle together in the same lakes.

The Calafornia mountain extends from the Columbia to the Colorado river, running parallel with the coast about 150 miles distant, and 12 or 15 hundred miles in length

with its peaks perpetually covered with eternal snows. There is a large number of water courses descending from this mountain on either side — those on the east side stretching out into the plain, and those on the west flow generally in a straight course until they empty into the Pacific; but in no place is there a water course through the mountain.

The next morning after finding the pasture, our herd having rested and satisfied their hunger pretty well, we resumed our journey along the edge of the plain, travelled as fast as their weakened state would admit of, still finding pasture sufficient for their subsistance, until, after several day's constant travelling, we fortunately came to our long sought for passage to the west. This was hailed with greater manifestations of joy by the company, than any circumstance that had occurred for some time, as it gave us to know where we were, and also to know when we might expect to arrive in a plentiful country of game. — Here we again layed by a day for the purpose of resting, and making preparations to follow our old trail towards the Great Salt Lake.

June 8th. This morning we left the Calafornia mountain, and took a north-east direction, keeping our former path, many traces of which were quite visible in places. Here vegetation is growing rapidly, giving our herd abundant pasture, in consequence of which they have greatly improved in appearance, and are enabled to travel quite fast. After continuing our course in this direction for a few days without interruption, we at length arrived in the neighborhood of the lakes at the mouth of Barren river, and which we had named Battle Lakes. All along our route from the mountain this far, we had seen a great number of Indians, but now that we had reached the vicinity of the place where we had the skirmish with the savages when

going to the coast, they appeared to us in double the numbers that they did at that time; and as we were then compelled to fight them, by their movements now, we saw that this would be the only course for us to pursue. We had used every endeavor that we could think of, to reconcile and make them friendly, but all to no purpose. We had given them one present after another — made them all the strongest manifestations of a desire for peace on our part, by promising to do battle against their enemies if required, and we found that our own safety and comfort demanded that they should be severely chastised for provoking us to such a measure.* Now that we were a good deal aggravated, some of our men said hard things about what they would do if we would again come in contact with these provoking Indians; and our Captain was afraid that, if once engaged, the passion of his men would become so wild that he could not call them off, whilst there was an Indian found to be slaughtered. Being thus compelled to fight, as we thought, in a good cause and in self defence, we drew up in battle array, and fell on the Indians in the wildest and most ferocious manner we could, which struck dismay throughout the whole crowd, killing 14, besides wounding a great many more as we rode right over them.

*Here again we have evidence that the company endeavored to conciliate these Indians, and avoid if possible an encounter, in which they knew the Indians would be the greatest sufferers. Many authorities charge the trappers with fighting these Indians as a result of a guilty conscience. There are certainly two sides to this question. The killing of the few Indians by the trappers for stealing traps when they first came among them, which was done without the knowledge or sanction of Capt. Walker, placed the whole company in a very delicate position. After this it was no doubt the captain's intention to pass through the country with as little intercourse as possible with the Indians, and with their knowledge of affairs it was the only safe way to proceed. Had they established friendly relations after the above affair, with the large number of Indians surrounding them — who as we have noted before endeavored to force themselves on the trappers while in camp, the proportion being probably twenty to one — when once in the camp of the trapper with their bows and arrows in such overwhelming numbers even the poor Diggers would have proved enemies not to be despised. The trappers however were the first transgressors, and there is no justification whatever in the killing of the first Indians, no matter how much they were justified in killing those later.

Our men were soon called off, only three of whom were slightly wounded.

This decisive stroke appeared to give the Indians every satisfaction they required, as we were afterwards permitted to pass through the country without molestation. We then continued our course up Barren river, without meeting with any thing to interrupt us, until about the 20th of June, when we found that if we continued in this direction our provisions would become scarce long before we would reach the Rocky mountains; and accordingly on the 21st our Captain decided on leaving this river and taking a Northern direction for the purpose of striking the head waters of the Columbia river,* where we would find game plenty, and also beaver.

After leaving Barren river we made a quick passage across the country and the first waters we came to, was Lewis river,† near its head, where we found game such as deer, elk, bear and beaver plenty. After laying in a small stock of fresh meat here, we resumed our journey towards the buffaloe country. On the morning of the 3d of July we were delighted by seeing some buffaloe in company with four of our Spanish cattle that had strayed a short distance from the main body during the night, two of which our hunters killed, being the first we had seen since we left the Great Salt Lake the year before. We travelled a short distance to-day when on arriving at a large spring of most delicious water situated in a beautiful grove, where we concluded to spend the National Anniversary of American In-

*He here refers to the Snake River, a tributary of the Columbia.

†The distance is not great from the head-waters of the Humboldt to that of the Snake, or Lewis River as Leonard calls it; it is a desert waste and for the most part a very poor trapping country. It was here that Milton Sublette had, about two years previous, encountered such hardships as are related by Meek; they followed about the same route that Leonard had traveled about two years before, when, after the battle of Pierre's Hole, Milton Sublette, N. J. Wyeth, and the fifteen free trappers, of whom he was one, made a fall hunt in this locality. The free trappers crossed this desert from the Snake to the head-waters of the Humboldt, which Leonard erroneously calls the Multenemough.

dependence; and accordingly our hunters went out in the afternoon and killed several very fat buffalo, which were dressed and the choice parts prepared for a grand feast on the morrow. When the morn of the glorious *fourth* first dawned we gave three salutes, spent the morning in various kinds of amusement, and at noon partook of our national dinner, which was relished the better as we had a small portion of good old brandy, which we drank in a few minutes, deeply regretting that we had not a small portion of what was that day destroyed by the millions of freemen in the States. — The remainder of the day was celebrated by drinking toasts, singing songs, shooting at mark, running, jumping, and practising on our horses — having the two Spaniards still with us, who learned us many singular pranks, and were a valuable edition to our company, as they created a great deal of fun, and were always in a good humor.*

July 5th. To-day continued on search of Capt. Bon-

*These are the two Mexicans who had deserted from the army and joined the company of trappers in California, as before related. According to Leonard, they were of the greatest assistance to the party in bringing up their stock in the mornings previous to starting, and in managing and caring for their horses during the whole trip. They were all expert horsemen and taught the trappers many of their tricks; they were light-hearted, gay, and popular with the men. Irving is especially caustic in his remarks concerning them. "Two of the Mexican party just mentioned [there were only two] joined the band of trappers, and proved themselves worthy companions. In the course of their journey through the country frequented by the poor Root Diggers there seems to have been an emulation between them, which could inflict the greatest outrages upon the natives. The trappers still considered them in the light of dangerous foes; and the Mexicans, very probably, charged them with the sin of horse-stealing; we have no other mode of accounting for the infamous barbarities of which, according to their own story, they were guilty; hunting the poor Indians like wild beasts, and killing them without mercy. The Mexicans excelled at this savage sport, chasing their unfortunate victims at full speed; noosing them around the neck with their lassos, and then dragging them to death.

"Had he [Captain Bonneville] exerted a little of the Lynch law of the wilderness, and hanged these dexterous horsemen in their own lassos, it would but have been a well-merited and salutary act of retributive justice."

There is nothing whatever in the course of this narrative to justify this tirade of Irving's; on the contrary, Leonard clearly states that the two Mexicans were of the greatest assistance, while they may have engaged in battle with the Indians on the return trip. If so, they were no more to blame than the trappers themselves. Had such cruelties been practiced as stated by Bonneville, Leonard would have

neville,* on Bear river, in finding whom we succeeded without having much difficulty, on the 12th, after travelling through a luxuriant, though rather rough country — where we again had intercourse with people of our own nation, being the first we had met with, except the crew of the Lagoda, since we separated from these same men at the Great Salt Lake.† Here we encamped for the purpose of resting a few days, and probably remaining until we would receive supplies of provisions, merchandize, &c., from St. Lewis— spending our time in discussing the many scenes encoun-

made some mention of them; so far as we are able to see he has not endeavored to hide matters of this character, e. g., he describes the tortures inflicted by the Spaniards and the Americans of his party in California on the Indians who had stolen the horses from the San Juan mission. It seems that Bonneville had to vent his spleen on some one, as he was no doubt feeling very much disappointed at the small returns from this expedition; as previously stated he was playing a losing game in the mountains, he was no match for the other fur companies; and on account of his disappointment and irritation he tries to bring reproach upon the whole expedition and especially the Mexicans. It was on the outgoing trip that the most of the Indians were killed, and as the Mexicans were not with them at this time they cannot be charged with this offense. No further mention is made of these Mexicans after reaching the rendezvous and we know nothing further in regard to them; they probably remained in the mountains, and became identified with the fur-trade.

*This name has heretofore been printed *Bowville*—by mistake. [Note in orig.]

†H. H. Bancroft gives the following account of this expedition, which was practically all we knew of it up to the time this work of Leonard's was discovered, which throws much additional light on the subject:

"Still one more detachment of the army of trappers in the great basin came into California before 1835 and this time by a northern route over the Sierra. The general operations of this army in the broad interior, and the summer rendezvous of 1832 and 1833 in the Green river valley, have been described by Irving in his narrative of Bonneville's adventures. The same author records the formation of a company sent by Captain Bonneville under I. R. Walker (J. R. Walker) to make explorations west of Great Salt Lake, and devotes a chapter to the adventures of that company. The aim as given by this authority was to explore the region surrounding the lake, the extent of which body of water was greatly exaggerated by Bonneville.

"The company consisted of 40 men some fifteen of whom were free trappers. The start from Green River was in July 1833 and after hunting a few days on Bear river, they went on to the region just north of the lake. Whatever may have been Walker's original intention or instructions, his men could not live in the desert, and they went westward in search of water, which was found in the head streams of the Mary or Ogden river since called the Humboldt. I suppose their destination from the first had been California, though Bonneville may have had different views; at any rate Walker's men followed the Humboldt down to its sink. There were troubles with the Indians along the way, respecting which the exact truth can hardly be known except that the trappers' conduct was dastardly, though these outrages were exaggerated by Bonneville and others.

"From the Humboldt sink Walker's men crossed the desert and the Sierra into California by a route about which there is much uncertainty. Said Bonneville to Irving, 'They struck directly westward,

tered by each of us, and the many hair-breadth 'scapes that such-and-such a one had made.

After remaining in this situation a few days, there arrived at our camp a company of 25 men belonging to the British North-West Fur Company, from Fort Vancouvre, situated near the mouth of the Columbia river. These people informed me that the infant colony at the mouth of the Columbia river had revived, and was now increasing rapidly, under the superintendance of the

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across the great chain of California mountains, for three and twenty days, they were entangled among these mountains, the peaks and ridges of which are in many places covered with perpetual snow. For a part of the time they were nearly starved; at length they made their way through them, and came down upon the plains of New California. They now turned toward the south and arrived at the Spanish village and Post of Monterey.'

"Stephen Meek tells us, 'they travelled now four days across the salt plain when they struck the California mountains, crossing which took fifteen days, and in fourteen days more they reached the two Laries,' Tulares, 'killed a horse and subsisted upon the same eleven days, came to the Spanish settlements.' Joseph Meek is represented as giving the route somewhat indefinitely westward to Pyramid Lake, up the Truckee river, and across the mountains, by the present railroad line very nearly into the Sacramento valley, and thence southward. This authority also states that they met a company of soldiers out hunting for cattle-thieves in the San José valley, and were taken as prisoners to Monterey. Finally a newspaper version founded on Walker's own statement, and corroborated to some extent by that of Nidever, gives what I suppose to have been the correct route, from the sink southwestward by what are now Carson Lake and Walker's Lake and river over the Sierra near the head-waters of the Merced, and down into the San Joaquin valley. [This is perfectly in accord with Leonard.]

"Whatever the route, they reached Monterey in November 1833 — and all authorities agree that with fandangoes and aguardiente they passed a good winter at the Capital [there is nothing in this work to substantiate this statement], though somewhat strangely their presence there has left but slight traces in the archives. George Nidever and John Price are the only members of the company known to have remained in California, though Frazer and Moz were probably of the party, several other men known to have arrived in 1833 may have belonged to it. In the spring Walker with most of his men started to return, skirting the Sierra southward and discovered Walker's Pass; then they kept to the northeast and by a route not exactly known joined Bonneville on Bear river in June, 1834 [This work clears up the question as to the route here referred to beyond any doubt.]

"That officer was altogether disgusted with such details of, 'this most disgraceful expedition,' as he had patience to hear. 'Had he exerted a little of the lynch law of the wilderness,' says Irving, 'and hanged these dexterous horsemen in their own lazos it would but have been a well merited and salutary act of retributive justice. The failure of this expedition was a blow to his pride, and a still greater blow to his purse. The Great Salt Lake still remained unexplored; at the same time the means furnished so liberally to fit out this favorite expedition, had all been squandered at Monterey' — so infinitely more important was it to explore the desert lake than to cross the continent."

British, and contained 150 families, the major part of which are English, Canadian, French and Indians, and but few Americans. They carry on agriculture to a considerable extent—the soil being very fertile, climate mild, and frost and snow but seldom known. They also have a Grist and Saw-Mill, and are establishing an extensive fishery at the mouth of the river, for the purpose of catching Salmon, as they are very abundant in this stream. They have a Governor, and live under a Republican form of Government. From all accounts, however, their government is not of much use, as the most unbounded freedom of action is exercised by all the members of the colony, & their government is intended more for effect with the Indians, than any advantage to the people.*

About the 17th of July this party left us and continued their journey on search of the Blackfeet Indians for the purpose of trading,—after which they said it was their intention to return to the coast by the same route.

We remained here until the 20th without meeting with

*This was one of the numerous wandering bands of Hudson Bay Company trappers; under whose charge they were I am unable to say. The infant colony here referred to was near Fort Vancouver, on the north side of the Columbia River and was composed principally of French Canadians, some few English, and half-breed Indians. These men had been servants of the Hudson Bay Company and on account of old age or some disability were unable to stand the hardships of mountain life; but very few of them wished to return to civilization. While in the mountains they had contracted marriages with the native women, and had families of half-breed children, to which they were fondly attached. They did not care to take these wives and the children back to their homes in the east, and face the disgrace, if such it might be called, attached to such a union, and they were too loyal and loved them too dearly to desert them, although it has happened in many instances. The English companies encouraged unions of this character purely from business motives, and men of great intelligence and refinement contracted such marriages. Dr. McLaughlin, Peter Skene Ogden, Alexander Ross, and in fact almost all of the officers of the companies did so. In this way they secured the friendship of the Indians. The Red River settlement became an asylum and was almost wholly settled by men who had contracted such marriages, and who did not wish to return to their former homes. It was indeed a high price to pay for commercial favors, as in many instances the offspring developed the worst traits of their maternal ancestor, while many were an honor and credit to their parents, and in many leading families in the Northwest today may be found a trace of this Indian blood.

As has been stated, this settlement was made on the north side of the Columbia, as was also Fort Vancouver, while the original

any thing particularly, when Capt. Cerrie joined us with 40 men, bringing a large supply of merchandize packed upon mules and horses from Missouri. With what we had on hand these men brought enough of merchandize and provision to supply our present company for a whole year.* This party intended to return immediately to Missouri with what peltries we had on hand.

These succouring companies are always looked for with great anxiety by the people who have been in the mountains any length of time. Many are at times entirely destitute of such articles as would be of great advantage to their comfort—many expect letters or some other manifestations of remembrance from their friends — besides some, who have been strictly temperate (because they could not help it, as the supply of liquor will always be exhausted,) look forward with longing anticipations for the supply which is always sent to this country by the owners of these companies, for the purpose of selling it to the men and thus paying their wages. It is generally

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Fort Astoria was on the south side near the mouth of the river, and was called Fort George after changing hands. The northwest boundary was not defined at this time, and the English company were certain that when the question finally came up for settlement, the Columbia River would be made the dividing line. For this reason they encouraged their subjects to settle here so as to be in their own territory; the land however was far inferior to that of the Willamette valley, which fact the Canadians were not long in discovering. Many of them moved over and took up land with a view to becoming citizens of the United States, which in fact almost all of them sooner or later did, when the boundary line was placed far north of the Columbia River.

*It will be observed that most of these mountain expeditions carried their merchandise on pack mules or horses, although the route was well adapted for wagons, and they were later used almost entirely, the route usually followed to the mountains was what was later the Oregon trail and the Oregon emigrants took their wagons with them. The first wheeled vehicle taken to the Rocky Mountains was the celebrated wheeled cannon, which was taken to the Salt Lake valley in 1826 by General Ashley. Smith, Sublette, and Jackson used wagons in 1830 to carry out their supplies, and took them as far as Wind River valley. Bonneville in 1832 used wagons to carry his merchandise to the mountains on his first trip, and took them as far as the Green River valley. The companies of trappers and traders who roved from one place to another in the mountains had to depend entirely upon pack-animals as wagons could not be used where the country was rough or mountainous, and trappers were not road-builders.

brought in a refined state, and is a cash article, which they retail at the enormous price of $1 per gill.* Generally when a succouring company of this kind arrives at the camp of the trapper, the men get a little mellow and have a real jubilee—with the exception of a few (after the Indian

*The following account between the American Fur Company (Astor's Company), and a celebrated free trapper Johnson Gardner, after whom Gardner's Hole was named, will give some idea of the prices charged by this company and illustrates how these companies imposed on these rovers of the mountains, enriching themselves and leaving the poor trapper, who incurred all the hardships and dangers, as poor as when he went to the mountains:

DR.			CR.	
1820-1833		1831		
To sundries advances as per account A	$4,034.70	July 12	By 53 Beaver skins at $6.50	$ 344.50
			1 Otter skin	2.50
		1832		
		July 21	206 Beaver sk's 278 lbs. at $4⅛	$1146.75
			1 Otter skin	2.00
			27¼ lbs. Beaver skin at Fort Cass $3.50	95.37
			Note on Smith, Sublette & Co.,	1321.48
		1833		
		June 30	16 Beaver traps left at Ft. Pierre	192.00
	$4,034.70		Balance carried down	930.10
1833				
June 30 To balance	$930.10			$4034.70

For Am. Fur Company,
J. Archdale Hamilton,
Fort Union, Sept. 12, 1833.

Extract from account "A" referred to in the above:

1832.			
June 28	Your share of advances to Tulloch & Co.		$ 12.00
	Liquor 8.00, Feast 4.00	12.00	
29	Ditto 4.00	4.00	
30	Shirts 8.00, Pantaloons 5.00	13.00	
	Liquor 11.00, Feast 2.00	13.00	
July 1	Ditto 6.00, Suit of clothes 70.00	76.00	
	Knives 4.00, Powder .75, Shoeing horse 3.00	7.75	
2	Tobacco .75, Cow skin 1.00	1.75	
5	Liquor	3.00	
6	Ditto	12.00	
7	Ditto 10.00, Tea 2.00, Pork 2.00	14.00	
	Blanket 12.00, Vinegar 1.00, Axe 6.00	19.00	
	Sugar 1.00	1.00	
8	Thread 1.00, Biscuit 8.50	9.50	
	Salt 6.00, Pepper 4.00, Handkfs 4.00	14.00	
	Coffee 18.00, Tea 8.00, Sugar 24.00	50.00	
	File 1.50, Tin Pans 2.00, Kettle 5.00	8.50	
	Tin cups 2.00, Knives 4.00, Awls 1.50	7.50	
	Tobacco 15.00, Sirsingles 6.00	21.00	
	Liquor 14.00	14.00	
9	Rice 4.00, Knife 2.00, Liquor and Keg 27.00	33.00	$334.00
	Total		$346.00

Of this amount $109.00 or nearly one-third was for liquor and feasting.

fashion) who are always prevented, as they must watch the rest, and keep a look-out lest the whole company should be surprised and massacred by the Indians. Scarcely one man in ten, of those employed in this country ever think of saving a single dollar of their earnings, but spend it as fast as they can see an object to spend it for. They care not what may come to pass to-morrow—but think only of enjoying the present moment.

We now began to make the necessary arrangements for our future operations—such as dividing such men as wished to remain in the mountains, into one company, and such as wished to return to the States in another, and settling with the men for the last year's services, and hiring them for the ensuing year.

July 30th. Having every necessary arrangement completed, Mr. Cerrie * returned to the State of Missouri with 45 men, and what fur, &c. we had in store. Capt. Bonneville was left to make his fall hunt on the head waters of the Columbia river, and the adjacent country with 50 men, and Capt. Walker with 55 men, being the balance of our force, to cross the Rocky mountains to the waters of the Missouri river, and then continue hunting and trading with the Indians until the month of June, 1835, when Capt. Bonneville with his men would join us on the Bighorn river, at the mouth of Popoasia creek,† which empties into the Bighorn below Wind river mountain.

After the usual ceremony of parting on such occasions,

*Mr. Cerré, one of the two principal assistants of Captain Bonneville, had nothing to do with the actual trapping and trading in the mountains; this part of the business seemed to be wholly in the hands of Captains Bonneville and Walker. The buying of the outfit and supplies, and the engaging of men for the mountains at St. Louis, and their transportation annually to some point previously agreed upon in the mountains, was in the hands of Mr. Cerré, as well as the conveying back to St. Louis of the returns of the previous year's traping and trading, also the men whose time had expired.

†The creek here referred to is the Popo Agie, which flows from the Wind River Mountains and empties into the Bighorn River, a few miles south of the mouth of Wind River.

which is performed by each one affectionately shaking hands all round—we separated, each division taking off in a separate direction. Capt. Walker continued up Bear river in an eastern direction, and the first night encamped at Smith's Fork. * In the morning we resumed our journey in the same direction, being the most direct route to the summit of the mountains, nothing occurring more than usual with the exception of killing any quantity of game we might think proper, until about the 8th of August, when, as the company were passing through a small prairie, we discovered a large grizzly bear laying in the shade of some brush at the edge of the woods, when four of us started for the purpose of killing him, but on coming close, the bear heard us and ran into the thicket. We now took

*Irving makes the following statement as to Captain Walker. "The captain [Bonneville] now made his arrangements for the current year. Cerré and Walker, with a number of men who had been to California, were to proceed to St. Louis with the packages of furs collected during the past year. Another party, headed by a leader named Montero, was to proceed to the Crow country, trap upon its various streams, and among the Black Hills, and thence to proceed to the Arkansas, where he was to go into winter quarters." According to Leonard, this plan was evidently not carried out, as we find Walker still in the mountains in the employ of Bonneville even after he returned to the frontier. Here seems to be "confusion worse confounded." We here again see the sour feeling against the California adventurers, and it is to be inferred that it was on account of Bonneville's dissatisfaction of the latter expedition that Captain Walker left the employ of the latter. Leonard is clear in his statement that Captain Cerré left the Bear River rendezvous with forty-five men for the frontier on July 30th; he says nothing whatever of Captain Walker's departure with this expedition, and as he had been associated with him as clerk for the year just passed, he would very likely have made mention of the fact. Moreover he was again employed in Captain Walker's company of fifty-five men who were to visit the Crow country, and mentions very clearly the route followed by Captain Walker until he reached the latter place, and their travels for the whole year, always speaking of Captain Walker as the leader, and his meeting Bonneville the succeeding year at Popo Agie creek. After the latter's return to the states with Leonard as one of his company, they left Walker in the Crow country to pursue his trapping until the following year. This agrees very well with Irving, except that he has substituted Montero for Walker. Who the former was and what became of him we do not know, at least I have never seen him mentioned except in connection with Bonneville by Irving. I cannot help but think that Leonard must have had some foundation for his statements, as this account was probably written less than a year after some of the events mentioned transpired, when they would have been still fresh in his memory. As will be seen we have pointed out some inaccuracies in this work, though of a minor character. We can scarcely believe that in one year Leonard would so forget his facts as to state that he was in the employ and under the direct charge of Montero, when he distinctly mentions Walker as his employer, and with the latter gentleman his position for more than a year previous was one of trust.

separate courses, intending to surround the bear & chase him out and have some sport; but one man, as we came to the thicket, acted very imprudently by dismounting and following a buffaloe path into the brush, when the bear, hearing our horses on the opposite side, started out on the same path and met the man, when he attempted to avoid it by climbing a small tree, but being too closely pressed was unable to get out of the reach of the bear, and as it passed, caught him by the leg and tore the tendon of his thigh in a most shocking manner. Before we could get to his aid the bear made off and finally escaped.*

Here we encamped and remained until the next day, when the wounded man expired—having bled to death from the wound, although every effort in our power was

We must give him credit for knowing Captain Walker, who was in charge of the company for fully a year, from July, 1834, until about the same time in 1835, when he returned with Captain Bonneville to the states. It would not have been possible for Captain Walker to have accompanied Captain Cerré to St. Louis and returned in time for the fall hunt. From this statement of Irving's we are led to believe that Captain Walker when he accompanied Captain Cerré left the service of Captain Bonneville. In the correspondence and journal of Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth, 1831-36, published by the Oregon Historical Society, on page 225, under date of July 4, 1834, the following entry appears, and is strong support of Irving's statement: "July 4th moved up the creek about one mile, then leaving it made W. by N. over a divide and by a pass which occurs in the lowest part of a high range of hills seven miles then W., 13 miles down a ravine which had a little water in it to its junction with another small run and the two are called Muddy, here we celebrated the 4th, I gave the men too much alcohol for peace took a pretty hearty spree myself. At the camp we found Mr. Cerry and Mr. Walker who were returning to St. Louis with the furs collected by Mr. Bonneville's company about 10 packs and men going down to whom there is due $10,000."

An examination of the files of the *Missouri Republican* published in St. Louis from July 1st, 1834, to the middle of April, 1835, has failed to reveal any mention of the return of Captain Walker from the mountains. It is true he may have started from the mountains with the intention of returning to this point, but may have changed his mind before reaching here. He may possibly have remained in the mountains, we in fact lose all trace of him for a number of years after severing connection with the Bonneville venture.

Joe Meek says that Antoine Montero, Bonneville's experienced trader, was in the Powder River country in 1836 and 1837, and was robbed of most of his goods by Bridger's men and the scarcely less expert Crows. He says this was an act of retaliation against Bonneville for his remarks relative to the trappers in the California expedition. It will be remembered that Captain Bonneville had left the mountains in the summer of 1835, and while the above may have been here during this period, Walker might also have been in charge of some other party, in the Crow country.

*It will be noted thoughout this narrative that accidents of this character are fully described, but Leonard fails to give the name of the victim. I suppose it was overlooked on his part, although in some instances he does give the names.

of no use. After burying this man, which was done in the customary manner of interring the dead in the mountains—having dug a deep hole in the ground, into which we deposited the body well wrapt up in blankets, and then filled up the grave, first with bark and then with earth, we continued our journey a short distance in the afternoon, and encamped on the head waters of Lewis river, and at the base of the Rocky mountains.

Here we made preparations for our voyage across the mountains. Few that have once performed a journey across these hills will encounter them a second time with a cheerful spirit; and particularly will they dread the task if they have encountered as many hardships and perils as some of the company that now reposed at its base, silently contemplating the dreadful fatigues to be encountered until we would reach the eastern base.

In the morning at an early hour, we left the waters which empty into the Pacific, and continued our way up the mountain, which we found tolerable rough, and covered, in places, with a large quantity of snow. We travelled without ceasing, and without meeting with any interruption, until we at last arrived in the Prairies, on the east side, near the head waters of the Yellow Stone river. On our passage across, we found several pieces of petrified wood, one of which was six or eight feet long—which our men divided amongst themselves, for the purpose of making whet-stones. Here we concluded on commencing our fall's hunt, as the beaver appeared to be quite numerous.

In the neighborhood of the head waters of this river, the country is generally composed of prairie hills, covered with excellent grass, and abound with plenty of game of different kinds. After trapping here a few days, we agreed to move down onto Wind river, which empties into Yellow

Stone a short distance below this, * and whilst leisurely travelling along one day through an extensive prairie, a large horde of buffaloe were discovered at a distance making towards us with considerable speed. No one was disposed to take any notice of them, as we had plenty of provision, until we seen them advance closer and faster, as if they were going to ride right over us. The whole drove came rushing past, at which our loose and pack horses took fright, and started in advance of the buffaloe, scattering our baggage in every direction over the prairie for several miles, leaving us nothing but our riding horses. This occasioned us to encamp for the purpose of collecting our stray horses and lost baggage, which was done, with the exception of one horse and some merchandize, which we were unable to find. To see a drove of perhaps a thousand buffaloe driving through a level plain as fast as their strength will permit them, is a most frightful spectacle; and then, when our horses started in advance, pitching and snorting, the scene was beyond description. Many of our horses were severely crippled in consequence of this chase,—so much so that we were detained three days in waiting on them and repairing our injured merchandize.

A few days after leaving this place we arrived, Aug. 20, on Popoasia creek, where we found an oil spring, rising out of the earth similar to that of any other spring. After emptying into the creek, the oil can be seen floating on the surface for a considerable distance. The oil is of a dark hue when in the fountain, almost like tar, but is as thin as water. If this spring was in the States, I have no doubt the chemist might make a valuable use of it. A Mr.

*The Wind River empties into the Bighorn, and not the Yellowstone. What is intended here no doubt is that they crossed the mountains, near the head-waters of the Yellowstone, which is quite near the head-waters of Wind River, and followed the latter stream to its junction with the Bighorn, near which is the Pope Agie River or the Popoasia of Leonard, the Bighorn being a tributary of the Yellowstone.

Bergen, belonging to our company, & who had been severely afflicted with the rheumatism, procured a phial of it, which he used, and afterwards said it afforded him entire relief.

Aug. 21st. To-day we continued in pursuit of beaver, which is our daily occupation, passing from one water course to another, through plains and over hills, all of which are prairie, with the exception of the base of the mountain, where there is an abundance of timber. We travelled in this manner, and spending our time mostly in this way, without meeting with any misfortunes, or any thing unusual in a backwood's life, occasionally being quite successful in catching beaver, until near the middle of October, when we arrived among the tribe of Crow Indians.

We now find the weather getting cold, with plenty of snow, frost and ice, which compels us to suspend our trapping for this season, having done a very fair business; and to increase our store of peltries, we now commenced trading with these Indians for buffaloe robes, beaver fur, &c. for which purpose we intend passing the winter in this neighborhood.

After remaining here a few days, in the meantime obtaining the principal part of the valuable peltries of the Indians, the company left them and appointed Wind river as the place to meet and resume the trading as soon as the Indians could collect a supply—leaving two men and myself among the Crows for the purpose of instigating them in the business of catching beaver and buffaloe.

Nov. 1st. This morning Capt. Walker and his followers left us, and continued in the direction of Wind river, there to erect a temporary trading house for the winter season, and we remained with the Indians who were engaged in collecting their winter's supply of meat, which

is the custom of all tribes in a plentiful country of game, to go in bodies sufficiently large to defend themselves in case of an attack by a neighboring hostile tribe, as there is scarcely three tribes to be found in the whole Indian country, on friendly terms with each other.

I now found myself in a situation that had charms which I had many times longed for. Ever since I engaged in the trapping business, I had occasional intercourse with the Indians, but never resided with them until now; which would afford me every opportunity to minutely observe their internal mode of living. The Crows are a powerful nation, and inhabit a rich and extensive district of country. They raise no vegetation, but entirely depend on the chase for a living. This is the situation of nearly every tribe, and when game gets scarce in one part of the country claimed by a certain tribe, they remove to another part, until after a while their game becomes scarce, when they are induced to encroach upon the territory of a neighboring tribe, which will at once create a fearful strife, and not unfrequently ends in the total destruction of some powerful nation. *

It will be recollected that I was amongst these Indians once before, when some of our horses were stolen and we followed them into the Crow village,—where we found

*The chief cause of the depopulation of the Indian tribes of the west at this period were their cruel and relentless wars, and the scarcely less fatal smallpox, and certain diseases contracted from their intercourse with the whites.

These wars, an instance of which (between the Crows and Blackfeet) is related in this work, amounted almost to extermination of some of the tribes. It was the policy of the traders to cultivate peace among them in order that the Indians might employ their time in collecting peltries, which interested the traders far more than did the Indians or the Indian wars. When a band of Indians met their hereditary foes it meant war to the death; the most cruel which one can imagine is illustrated by this account of Leonard's of the Crows and Blackfeet. It frequently happened that the greater number of both bands were killed or so injured that they afterwards died; those defeated were killed outright, the conquerors seldom gave and indeed much more rarely were asked for mercy; such an act would have been an everlasting disgrace to the supplicant. Accounts of these horrible butcheries exist at the present time only in the traditions of the various tribes. They were as unsparing of a weak as of a

our horses and also a negro man, in the winter of 1832-33. This man we found to be of as great advantage to us now as on former occasions, * as he has become thoroughly acquainted with their language, method of transacting their public and private business, and considered of great value by the Indians. He enjoys perfect peace and satisfaction, and has every thing he desires at his own command.

The Crow nation contains from 7 to 8,000 souls, and are divided into two divisions of an equal number in each—there being too great a number to travel together, as they could not get game in many places to supply such a force. Each division is headed by a separate chief, whose duty it is to pilot them from one hunting ground to another, and to lead his followers to battle in time of war—one of whom they call Grizzly Bear and the other, Long Haired Chief, which name he derives from the extreme length of his hair, which is no less than nine feet eleven inches long. This is the principal chief, or Sachem, of the nation, and is quite a worthy and venerable looking old man of 75 or 80 years of age. He uses every possible precaution to preserve his hair, which is perfectly white, and has never had it cut since his infancy. He worships it as the director or guide of his fate through life—never rising or laying

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powerful foe; it is not therefore to be wondered at that their numbers were so greatly decreased during the first half of the last century.

The smallpox made inroads on them scarcely less than the cruel wars. It is altogether likely that this disease was prevalent among them before they came in direct contact with the whites. They were utterly ignorant of the character and treatment of this disease, and those who would have recovered had they left it run its course were usually killed by the universal treatment used by the Indians for all diseases. We have spoken of this in another place. Leonard does not mention an outbreak of the latter disease while he was in the mountains. It was raging along the Missouri about this time or a little later.

*The event here referred to was when they had their horses stolen by the Crows, while they were encamped on Green River in the latter part of the year 1832. He was then in the company of the fifteen free trappers. They followed the Crows to their village, and through the assistance and good offices of Edward Rose they recovered their horses for some trifling presents, after which occurred the disastrous affair with the Aricaras.

down without humbly and devoutly adoring this talisman, and with they term Bah-park (medicine.)

It is customary for every tribe of Indians in the regions of the Rocky mountains to have some instrument or article to pay homage to and invoke, but no nation, I believe, are so devoutly attached to their talismans as the Crow nation—it is their life—their very existence. Almost every individual of the Crow tribe has something of this kind, and which generally consists of a seed, a stone, a piece of wood, a bear or eagle's claw, or any thing which their fancy may lead them to believe has a successful virtue, and which has been purchased of some noted warrior who has been successful in his undertakings whilst in the possession of such an article. This magical thing, whatever it may be, is carefully enveloped in a piece of skin, and then tied round their neck or body. If an old experienced warrior gives one or two young men an article of this kind on going to war, and they happen to be successful in taking scalps or stealing horses, the whole affair is attributed to the virtue of his talisman, and he can then sell it for almost any price he demands, and if it be a precious stone, or seed, or piece of wood, all similar articles are immediately enhanced in value, and the greater the price they pay for such an article, the greater service it will be to them in the hour of need.—Some of them will even give four or five good horses for the most trifling and simple article of this kind.

Their principal wealth consists of horses, porcupine quills, and fine dressed skins, for clothing, &c. but nothing is of so much value as their idol; without which an Indian is a poor miserable drone to society, unworthy the esteem and companionship of brutes. Long-haired chief worships nothing but his hair, which is regularly combed

and carefully folded up every morning into a roll about three feet long by the principal warriors of his tribe.

Their houses are composed of dressed buffaloe hides and pine poles about 25 or 30 feet in length, and about three inches in diameter. These poles are stuck upon end in a circle, and all coming together at the top forms the shape of a hay-stack.—The buffaloe robes are then cut in proper shape, sewed together and covered over their habitation. Their fire is placed in the centre of the lodge, and the poles being left apart at the top affords a very good draught for the smoke. Some of these houses are much larger than others, such as are intended for the transacting of public business. These are constructed with much care, and are quite comfortable and convenient habitations—the buffaloe robes affording a sufficient shield from the effects of the cold. In their public buildings all their national affairs are discussed at stated periods by the warriors and principal men. Here they have their public smokes and public rejoicings.

This tribe is also governed by a species of police, such as having a committee of soldiers appointed for the purpose of keeping order and regulation in their village, appointing a day for a general hunt and keeping any who might be so disposed, from running ahead and chasing off the game, in order that each individual may have a fair chance to obtain an equal share of provision, with his neighbor.—These soldiers are also to observe that on such occasions their village is not left in a weak and unsafe condition by too many going to war, or to horse stealing, (which generally ends in war) at a time, and also to see that such a party is properly provided with a competent commander, and if not, it is their duty to supply the deficiency by appointing one to act in his place. If any person acts contrary to their laws, these soldiers have the liberty of

punishing him for it, which is done by shaving his horses main and tail, cut up his lodge, and whip him, if not contrary to the decision of the principal chief, in whom is invested the power of vetoing every act of this executive committee, if not agreeable to his wish.

When game becomes scarce, and they are about to move to another section, every moveable article is packed upon horse-back, when they travel on until they arrive in a country abounding with game.—Their children from two to three years of age, and unable to ride, are tied upon the baggage, and those younger are fastened upon a board and conveyed in manner as heretofore described. They have a sort of dray formed by these poles, which is done by fastening one end to the pack saddle, and the other end dragging on the ground, on which they place their furniture.

There is more personal ambition and rivalry existing among this tribe than any other I became acquainted with —each one trying to excel the other in merit, whilst engaged in some dangerous adventure.—Their predatory wars afford them every opportunity for this, as they are at liberty and sometimes compelled to engage in the battle's strife as soon as they are able to bend the bow or wield the tomahawk.—Their first promotion from the ranks of a private citizen, is secured by stealing a few horses and killing one or two of their enemies, when they are eligible to the title of a Small Brave. By adding so many more acts of this kind, they receive the title of a Large or Great Brave; from thence to a Little Chief, and to rise to the station of a Great Chief, they must steal such a number of horses, kill and scalp such a number of the enemy, and take so many guns or bows and arrows.

Whenever one person exceeds the existing chief in these deeds, he is installed into the office of chief of the

nation, which he retains until some other ambitious, daring brave exceeds him. They always take good care, however, not to excel their present chief, old Long-hair.

This school, as it was, creates a great deal of jealousy and envy among the people, but it seldom leads to any disturbance, as the executive soldiers, or police, are always ready to chastise and punish any such conduct.

Any person not rising to either of these stations by the time he is twenty years of age, has nothing to say or do in any public business whatever, but is compelled to perform different kinds of meniel labour altogether degrading to a man, as it is putting him on an equality with the squaws—which is low enough indeed in the estimation of the Indian. Such a man becomes the slave of the women, as they are at liberty to order him to do any thing they may think proper, such as carry wood, water, &c., or any drudgery that is required to be done.

After receiving the title of Little Chief they are at liberty to speak and take part in all public debates in relation to the affairs of the nation, and are exempt from all kinds of labour in going to war, which has to be done by the privates, who are generally young men, as on such occasions they have no women with them; and as they progressively rise, they are at liberty to order and command those who are beneath them. This is the principal cause of their ambition, which far exceeds description. If one of the men who has fallen into the rank of a woman, and has become tired of that occupation, he will undergo any exertion, and encounter any danger, no matter how great, in order to distinguish himself and improve his forlorn and dishonorable condition.

Soon after we took up our quarters with these Indians, I occupied my time in ascertaining their manner of taking game, which, if it is more laborious, it is more successful

than the Spanish mode of taking wild horses. When their families are in want of provision, or desirous of having a hunt, one of the principal men, who might be called the *trumpeter*, will mount a horse and ride round through the encampment, village, or settlement, and publicly proclaim that on a stated day the whole tribe must be prepared for a general hunt, or *surround*. When the day arrives the village is alive betimes in the morning, and several hundred will sometimes mount their race-horses, repair to a certain designated section of country, which they are to surround. When the men have all had time to get to their allotted stations, they begin to close in, driving the game, principally buffalo, into a circle and when they are pretty well confined in the circle, they commence killing them—until which time, no man dare attempt to take any of the game. In this manner they have sometimes caught several hundred buffalo, besides many other animals, at a single surround.

When they are in a country suitable, these people will destroy the buffaloe by driving a herd of some hundreds to the edge of a convenient rocky precipice, when they are forced headlong down the craggy descent. This is more dangerous than the other method, as the buffaloe, unless the Indians are very numerous, will sometimes rush in a solid column through their ranks, knocking down the horses and tramping the riders under their feet.

They have another method of taking the buffalo, which is in this way:—If they know of a place at the base of some mountain that is surrounded on three sides with inaccessible precipices,and a level valley leading into it, they manage to drive the whole gang of buffaloe into this neck and force them up to its termination, when they erect a strong fence across the valley, or outlet, and then butcher their prisoners at leisure.

In a place of this kind I was shewn by the chief Grizzly Bear, upwards of seven hundred buffalo skulls which he said had been caught at a single hunt, and which had taken place about four years previous.

About the 20th of November, after travelling for three or four days in pursuit of provision, we at length arrived in the vicinity of buffalo, where we pitched our tents and the Indians prepared for a general hunt. In the evening their horses were all dressed in the best style, and at an early hour the next morning four or five hundred Indians were mounted and ready for the chase.

This was a favorable opportunity for me to gratify my curiosity in seeing this kind of sport, and my companions and myself followed in the rear of the Indians.— Our hunters had not advanced far on this sporting expedition until they met with an object which entirely put them out of the notion of showing us their ajility in catching buffalo, for, at some distance across the plain, along the base of some rough craggy hills, was espied a considerable body of people, who appeared to be advancing towards us. Immediately a halt was called, for the purpose of observing the movements of the strangers, and consulting on what steps should be taken. It did not require the keen eye of a Crow Indian long to tell that their visitors were Indians and belonged to their implacable enemies, the Blackfeet tribe. This was enough. War was now their only desire, and our Indians advanced towards their enemies as fast as the speed of their horses would admit, who, being on foot, were soon overtaken and forced to ascend the rocks, which they did in safety. The Crows immediately surrounded the Blackfeet, confident of an easy victory, but when they made the attack they found that their enemy was too well prepared for defence, and they immediately despatched an express to the village for a

reinforcement, of men, conscious that the Blackfeet would not attempt to leave their present position until such reinforcement would have time to arrive.

This was quite a different kind of sport from that Whilst the express was absent both parties employed their but one of no less interest, and far more important to me. Whilst the express was absent both parties employed their time in strengthening their positions — the Blackfeet had chosen a most fortunate spot to defend themselves, and by a little labour found themselves in a fort that might have done credit to an army of frontier regulars. It was situated on the brow of a hill, in a circle of rocks shaped similar to a horse-shoe, with a ledge of rocks from three to four feet high on either side, and about ten feet, on the part reaching to the brink of the hill, with a very creditable piece of breast work built in front, composed of logs, brush and stones. From their present situation they have a decided advantage over the Crows, and if well prepared for war, could hold out a considerable length of time, and deal destruction thick and fast on any force that might attempt to scale their fort—which looks more like the production of art than nature. Whilst the Blackfeet were assiduously engaged in defending their position, the Crows were no less idle in preparing for the attack, the destruction of which, they were determined should not be relaxed as long as there was a living Blackfoot Indian to be found in the neighborhood. Previous to the arrival of the reinforcement, which was about ten o'clock, there had been three Crows and one Blackfoot killed, which was done at the first attack after the latter were driven into their fort.

When the express reached the Crow village every man, woman and child able to point a gun or mount a horse repaired with all speed to the scene of action, who

came up uttering the most wild and piercing yells I ever heard in my life. A great deal of contention at first took place among the principal men of the Crow tribe as to the manner of attacking their enemy, who appeared to look down upon them in defiance; notwithstanding the Crows kept up a continual yelling and firing of guns, all of which was without effect. Finally they appeared to harmonize and understand each other.

As matters now seemed to indicate the approach of a crisis, I repaired to an eminence about 200 yards from the fort among some cedar trees, where I had an excellent view of all their movements. At first the Crows would approach the fort by two or three hundred in a breast, but on arriving near enough to do any execution, the fire from the fort would compell them to retreat. They then formed in a trail along the top of the ridge, and in rotation would ride at full speed past the breastwork, firing as they passed, and then throwing themselves on the side of the horse until nothing will be exposed to the enemy except one arm and one leg. This they found to be very destructive to their horses and also their men, there being now ten Crows and several horses laying dead on the field. Urged by their ill success thus far, and by the piteous lamentations of the wives, children and relatives of those who had fell, the Crow chiefs decided on suspending the attack, and determined to hold a council of war for the purpose of deciding on what measures should be adopted, in order to destroy these brave Blackfeet.

When the principal chiefs met in council, all was still except the lamentations of the bereaved, who, perhaps, regret the severe pennance which the customs of their people compelled them to endure for the memory of a deceased friend, and lament more on account of the prospect of trouble ahead, than for the loss which they

have sustained. The chiefs held a hasty and stormy council. Some were in favour of abandoning the Blackfeet entirely, & others were determined on charging into their fort and end the battle in a total and bloody massacre. This was finally decided upon, but not until after several speeches were made for and against it, and the pipe of war smoked by each brave and chief.

As soon as this determination of the chiefs was made known the war-whoop again resounded with the most deafening roar through the plain—every voice that was able to make a noise was strained to its very utmost to increase the sound, until the very earth, trees and rocks seemed to be possessed of vocal powers. By their tremendous howling they had worked as great a change in the courage of their soldiery, as the most soul-enlivening marshal music would the cowardly fears of a half-intoxicated militia company.

Now was the moment for action. Each man appeared willing to sacrifice his life if it would bring down an enemy; and in this spirit did they renew and repeat the attack on the breast-work of their enemy, but as often did they retreat with severe loss. Again and again did they return to the charge, but all was of no use—all their efforts were of no avail—confusion began to spread through their ranks—many appeared overwhelmed with despair—and the whole Crow nation was about to retreat from the field, when the negro,* who has been heretofore mentioned, and who had

*This is the renegade Rose of Astorian fame, whom Mr. Hunt describes. Two men, Edward Rose and James Beckwourth or Beckwith, who were partly colored became quite prominent men among the Crow Indians. The latter wrote an account of what he calls his adventures, but his veracity is questioned by many and one authority calls him a "charming liar." Many of his adventures have their foundation in his fertile imagination, and there is no dobut that Beckwith knew Rose well and in his book gives many of the latter's adventures as his own. Chittenden says, "Rose was the son of a white man, a trader among the Cherokee Indians, and of a half-breed Cherokee and negro woman. He was a man of powerful frame and in some of his experiences had received a cut through the nose, which gave him the nickname of Nez Coupé, or Cut Nose Rose. He

been in company with us, advanced a few steps towards the Crows and ascended a rock from which he addressed the Crow warriors in the most earnest and impressive manner. He told them that they had been here making a great noise, as if they could kill the enemy by it—that they had talked long and loud about going into the fort, and that the white men would say the Indian had a crooked tongue, when talking about his war exploits. He told them that their hearts were small, and that they were cowardly—that they acted more like squaws than men, and were not fit to defend their hunting ground. He told them that the white men were ashamed of them and would refuse to trade with such a nation of cowards — that the

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was a man of few words, rather inclined to be moody in disposition." He first comes to our notice in *Astoria*, where Mr. Hunt meets him at the Aricara village where he no doubt came occasionally from the Crow country. "Mr. Hunt, considered himself fortunate in having met with a man who might be of great use to him in any intercourse he might have with the tribe [Crows]. This was a wandering individual, named Edward Rose, whom he had picked up somewhere on the Missouri — one of those anomalous beings found on the frontier, who seem to have neither kin or country. He had lived sometime among the Crows, so as to become acquainted with their language and customs; and was withal, a dogged, sullen, silent fellow, with a sinister aspect, and more of the savage than the civilized man in his appearance. He was engaged to serve in general as a hunter, but as guide and interpreter when they should reach the country of the Crows." After being on his way towards the Crow country for some days, "as he was seated in his tent after nightfall, one of the men came to him privately, and informed him that there was mischief brewing in the camp. Edward Rose, the interpreter, whose sinister looks we have already mentioned, was denounced by this secret informer as a designing, treacherous scoundrel, who was tampering with the fidelity of certain of the men, and instigating them to a flagrant piece of treason. In the course of a few days they would arrive at the mountainous district infested by the Upsarokas or Crows, the tribe among which Rose was to officiate as interpreter. His plan was that several of the men should join him, when in that neighborhood, in carrying off a number of the horses with their packages of goods, and deserting to those savages. He assured them of good treatment among the Crows, the principal chiefs and warriors of whom he knew; they would soon become great men among them, and have the finest women, and the daughters of the chiefs for wives; and the horses and goods they carried off would make them rich for life." This caused Mr. Hunt to be much alarmed, as he knew some of the men to be dissatisfied with the enterprise.

"The plot of Rose to rob and abandon his countrymen when in the heart of the wilderness, and to throw himself into the hands of a horde of savages, may appear strange and improbable to those unacquainted with the singular and anomalous characters that are to be found about the borders. This fellow, it appears, was one of those desperadoes of the frontiers, outlawed by their crimes, who combined the vices of civilized and savage life, and are ten times more barbarous than the Indians with whom they consort. Rose had formerly belonged to one of the gangs of pirates who infested the islands of the

Blackfeet would go home and tell their people that three thousand Crows could not take a handful of them,—that they would be laughed at, scorned, and treated with contempt by all nations wherever known—that no tribe would degrade themselves hereafter by waging war with them, and that the whole Crow nation, once so powerful, would forever after be treated as a nation of squaws. The old negro continued in this strain until they became greatly animated, & told them that if the red man was afraid to go amongst his enemy, he would show them that a black man was not, and he leaped from the rock on which he

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Mississippi, plundering boats as they went up and down the river, and who sometimes shifted the scene of their robberies to the shore, waylaying travellers as they returned by land from New Orleans with the proceeds of their downward voyage, plundering them of their money and effects, and often perpetrating the most atrocious murders. These hordes of villains being broken up and dispersed, Rose had betaken himself to the wilderness, and associated himself with the Crows, whose predatory habits were congenial with his own, had married a woman of the tribe, and, in short, had identified himself with those vagrant savages."

This was his story, not as known to Hunt but ascertained later. He used every effort to frustrate the above plans and took every precaution to prevent surprise in the march and thefts by the Crows; at the same time he made Rose such a liberal offer in the matter of pay as to make it quite as profitable and less dangerous for him to remain honest as to attempt to carry out his design. They would dispense with his services when they reached his friends the Crows.

Irving describes Rose again in *Bonneville*, whose character he continues to assail, and we are inclined to think he does not do him justice, as his treatment of Leonard and his companions is not in accord with the above character. Irving describes a battle Rose had with the Blackfeet which is no doubt the same as that more fully described by Leonard. In 1823 Joshua Pilcher referred to Rose in one of his letters as "a celebrated outlaw who left this country in chains some ten years ago." Colonel Leavenworth in an official report of the same year, after commending the services of Rose as an interpreter, adds, "I have since heard that he was not of good character."

Rose first went up the river either in 1807 or 1809, and may have been one of the hunters advertised for by the Missouri Fur Company, who were to act as escort for the return of the Mandan chief whom Lewis and Clark had taken to Washington on their return from the mountains.

It was about this time that he fell in with the Crow Indians with whom he took up his abode. He probably remained with them until the spring of 1811, when he went to the Missouri and fell in with Mr. Hunt as stated. He probably remained with the Crows for the next eight or ten years, when he went to reside with the Aricaras, on the Missouri, for the next three years, from about 1820 to 1823. With the revival of the fur-trade on the Missouri he was employed by Pilcher and Ashley as an interpreter. He acted in this capacity for Ashley when he met with his disastrous defeat at the hands of the Aricaras in 1823. The part he played here was highly creditable. He warned Ashley of his danger, as he was aware all was not right, but the latter was deceived by the pretended friendship of the Indians, and rejected Rose's timely warning. When Colonel Leavenworth arrived at this point with his military force, shortly after Rose was engaged as interpreter, he was

had been standing, and, looking neither to the right nor to the left, made for the fort as fast as he could run. The Indians guessing his purpose, and inspired by his words and fearless example, followed close to his heels, and were in the fort dealing destruction to the right and left nearly as soon as the old man.*

Here now was a scene of no common occurrence. A space of ground about the size of an acre, completely crowded with hostile Indians fighting for life, with guns, bows and arrows, knives and clubs, yelling and screaming until the hair seemed to lift the caps from our heads. As

given the nominal rank of ensign upon Ashley's recommendation. The official report of the commanding officer shows that Rose took an active part in the operations before the villages, and it was upon him that the main reliance was placed to open communications with the Aricaras. He gave Leavenworth notice of the intended evacuation of the village by the Indians, but here, as was the case with Ashley, his warning was not heeded until the movement was over and the Indians gone. In the report of Colonel Leavenworth to General Atkinson, Oct. 20, 1823, he refers to the services of Rose as follows: "I had not found any one willing to go into those villages, except a man by the name of Rose, who had the nominal rank of ensign in General Ashley's volunteers. He appeared to be a brave and enterprising man, and well acquainted with those Indians. He had resided for about three years with them; understood their language, and they were much attached to him. He was with General Ashley when he was attacked. The Indians at that time called to him to take care of himself, before they fired on General Ashley's party. This was all I knew of the man. I have since heard that he was not of good character. Everything he told us, however, was fully corroborated. He was perfectly willing to go into their villages, and did go in several times."

When the military expedition of 1825, under General Atkinson and Major O'Fallon, went up the Missouri River he was again employed as an interpreter, and again proved very useful to them. We hear very little of him in the succeeding years until we find him again in this book of Leonard's in the years 1832 and 1834. Little is known of where or how he died; his grave, according to Chittenden, is on the banks of the Missouri nearly opposite the mouth of Milk River. We know nothing of this man's history previous to his going to the mountains, only as given by Irving, and rumors as recorded by others. We cannot but think Hunt was far more suspicious of Rose than he had any just reason for. His subsequent history and actions are so commendable, that it is with pleasure we add the testimony of Leonard to that of the few others, who have experienced his good offices.

*The casual reader, who has read Beckwourth's prevarications might possibly suppose that the negro here referred to was he. There is a possibility however that he published this very occurrence as his own. There is in chapter 14 of his autobiography the description of a battle with the Blackfeet, in many particulars much the same as the above. He no doubt had a retentive memory and appropriated as his own about half of all the stories he heard about the camp-fires while in the Indian country. Beckwourth according to his own statement was born in 1809 and therefore would not be considered an old man in 1832 or '33.

Beckwourth became involved in some very questionable transactions in California in the later years of his life.

soon as most of the Crows got into the fort, the Blackfeet began to make their escape out of the opposite side, over the rocks about 10 feet high. Here they found themselves no better off, as they were immediately surrounded and hemmed in on all sides by overwhelming numbers. A large number on both sides had fell in the engagement in the inside of the fort, as there the Crows had an equal chance with their enemy, but when on the outside the advantage was decidedly against them, as they were confined in a circle and cut down in a few moments. When the Blackfeet found there was no chance of escape, and knowing that their was no prospect of mercy at the hands of their perplexed and aggravated, but victorious enemy, they fought with more than human desperation. From the time they left their fort, they kept themselves in regular order, moving forward in a solid breast, cutting their way through with their knives, until their last man fell, pierced, perhaps,with an hundred wounds. In this massacre,if one of the Blackfeet would receive a dangerous wound he would drop to the ground, as if dead, and if his strength was not too far exhausted, he would suddenly rise to his feet and plunge his knife to the heart of an enemy who would be rushing through the crowd, and then die. This would not be done in self defence, nor with a hope of escape, but through revenge.

This was truly a scene of carnage, enough to sicken the stoutest heart—but nothing at all in comparison with what took place afterwards. The Crows, when they found the enemy strewed over the field, none having escaped their vengeance, commenced a general rejoicing, after which they retired a short distance for the purpose of taking repose and some refreshments.

Although the victory was complete, the Crows paid dear for it, having lost about thirty killed, and as many

more wounded, besides a great number of horses. The loss of their companions did not appear to dampen the rejoicings of the men the least bit, and indeed it would appear that the squaws should do all the mourning and lamenting, as well as all the labour. Their dead were all collected together, when the squaws went round and claimed their kindred. This was a most affecting scene—but what was it when contrasted with that enacted by the men as soon as they had rested from the toil of battle. The women would throw themselves upon the dead bodies of their husbands, brothers, &c. and there manifest the most excruciating anguish that any human being could suffer. The women were occupied in this manner when the men went to work to glut their merciless vengeance on their fallen foe.

Many of the Blackfeet who were scattered over the battle ground had fallen by broken limbs or wounded in some way, & were yet writhing in agony, unable to injure any one or help themselves in any way. All such were collected together, and then tormented in a manner too shocking to relate. These fiends would cut off their ears, nose, hands and feet, pluck out their eyes, pull out their hair, cut them open and take out part of their insides, piercing them with sharp sticks—in short, every method of inflicting pain was resorted to. In order that they might render their mode of torment still more excruciating, they would bring into the presence of the dying the bodies of those who were already dead, and then tare out their hearts, livers, and brains, and throw them in the faces of the living, cutting them to pieces, and afterwards feeding them to their dogs—accompanying the whole with the most taunting and revengeful epithets, whilst those not engaged in this fiendish work, were occupied in keeping up a constant screaming, howling and yelling. When this

torment commenced, all the sufferers who could get hold of a knife or any thing with which they could take away their lives, would do so immediately. All the torment that could be inflicted by their persecutors, failed to bring a single murmur of complaint from the sufferers—nor would they signify the least symptoms of being conquered. No—not if they had been offered undisturbed liberty, would those sufferers who had lost so many of their companions, acknowledge themselves prisoners in the Crow village. Death they preferred to this, and death with indescribable horrors, did they all receive.

After they had finished tormenting the living, which was not done until there was no more to kill, they commenced cutting off the heads of the mangled bodies, which were hoisted on the ends of poles and carried about, and afterwards dashed them against trees, rocks, &c. leaving them on the plain to be devoured by wild beasts.

The men now repaired to their dead friends, where they went through various manoeuvres, as much as to say that they had revenged their death, and soon afterwards every thing was on the move towards the camp, where we arrived soon after dark, not to rest, and calmly meditate on the scenes of the day, but to see further developments of the superstitious propensities of the poor neglected savage.

After arriving in the village, a part of the men commenced their public rejoicings, by beating upon drums, dancing and singing, which, together with the incessant wailings and lamentations of those who had lost relatives, gave us a night that was entirely free from repose, and averse to sober reflection. In this manner the whole night was spent, nor did the morning bring any prospect of a cessation of these singular customs.

About ten o'clock the whole tribe was engaged in per-

forming the funeral obsequies to the remains of their deceased relatives. At an early hour the wife had seated herself by the side of her dead husband, where she would remain until it came his turn to be interred, when she would clasp the cold and lifeless form of him, whom she still seems to love, and cling to it until forced away by some of the men. Their manner of burying their dead is also most singular in some respects: The corpse is carefully wrapped up in buffalo robes and laid into the grave, together with his talisman, and any thing else to which he was attached,—and if he be a chief of some importance, his horse's tail & mane are shaved off and buried with him — these benighted Indians believing that each of these hairs will turn into a beautiful horse in the land of spirits, where they think that a horse and bow and arrow are all that a man requires to perfect his happiness and peace.

As soon as the dead were deposited in the silent tomb, the musicians collected together and marched through the camp, beating upon sticks and drums, as a signal for the mourners to fall in the rear, which they did, and the whole procession then proceeded to the top of some rising ground, not far off, where the males and females separated into different groups.—The female mourners now took the point of an arrow, which was fixed in a stick, & commenced pricking their heads, beginning at one ear and continuing round the forehead to the other, making incisions half an inch apart all round; and the men went through a similar course on their legs, arms, &c., until the blood oozed out in streams. All this performance was done without creating the least appearance of pain.

After doing this each female that had lost a near relative or particular friend, collected along a log and

deliberately cut off a finger at the first joint, * which was done with as much coolness as the pricking process. This is done by the males, also, except the two first fingers on the right hand, which they preserve for the purpose of bending the bow, and many of the aged females may be seen with the end off each of their fingers, and some have even taken off the second crop. Whilst this was being done by the mourners, the other Indians kept up a continual noise with their music, singing, dancing and yelling.

The procession now returned to the village with the faces of all the female mourners daubed over with their own blood, which they never remove until it wears off. Those not wishing to loose a finger are at liberty to shave off their hair close, but it is the general custom among the Crows to lose a piece of their finger. Any one who has lost a relative is not allowed to take part in the dance or any kind of sport for 12 or 13 moons, unless one of their surviving friends take the life of an Indian belonging to the tribe that killed the mourned one—which will at once atone for all loss, and drown all grief, and she is then allowed to wash the blood from her face and resume her former standing in society. This night was spent in about the same manner as last night—some being engaged in dancing and singing, and others crying and lamenting the loss they had sustained.

Nov. 22d. This morning the chief of the nation gave orders to move for the purpose of getting among the buffalo and other game—and also to be prepared for a national dance on their march. About ten o'clock the whole tribe was in readiness and we started in the direction

*This custom is not confined to the Crows, as many of the plains tribes did the same. I have observed that among the Cheyennes and Arapahoes many of the very old women have the fingers cut off at the first joint; this practice is not however followed at the present time, in fact there is little occasion for it. Most of the Indians die natural deaths, and I do not think this practice is resorted to.

of the battle ground, and on arriving there a halt was ordered for the purpose of giving the dead carcases of the Blackfeet the last evidence of the Crow's revenge—which was done by beating and mangling every piece of flesh they could find. This done, the march was resumed to a beautiful level plain, perfectly smooth and covered with short grass, for two or three miles square—where the national dance was to take place. When they had dismounted, the whole nation formed a ring, when 69 of the oldest squaws, all painted black, formed themselves in a line in the centre of the circle, each bearing a pole from 12 to 15 feet in length. The person who struck the first blow at their late battle with the Blackfeet now commenced dancing, and was immediately followed by every young man and woman belonging to the tribe, (except the mourners, who stood silent, melancholy spectators) all clad in their best dresses, handsomely worked with porcupine quills, and their heads delightfully ornamented with magpie and pheasant tails—forming themselves in double file, and dancing round the whole circle to wild, though not irregular music—which they make by stretching a piece of buffalo skin over a hoop similar to a riddle, where it is well stretched, and then sewed together and filled with sand and left until it is dry and properly shaped, when the sand is thrown out and some pebbles or bullets put in, when it is ready for the hand of the musician—and is in shape similar to a goard.

After dancing round the circle once or twice, they would suddenly halt; shout their terrible war-whoop — shoot off their guns, when the rattling music would again commence and they would all be engaged in the dance. Each member of the tribe, who was not mourning, from the child up to the enfeebled old man and woman took part in this exercise. After about two hours spent in this

manner, they concluded their celebration by the display of an Indian battle, which was exceedingly grand, far beyond any description I have ever heard. 70 or 80 of their best warriors mounted their most active horses, one party acting the part of their enemies, the Blackfeet, each one armed with a gun, a club or lance, and some with both. They separated, one party to one side and the other to the other side of the plain, and at a given signal would advance towards each other as fast as their horses would run, firing and striking as they would pass—throwing themselves nearly under their horses, so much so, that they could fire at each other under their horse's belly.* During the time they seemed to exert every nerve, yet they kept up a continual noise, by repeating the most wild and ferocious yells I ever heard. Their activity in throwing the lancet is no less wonderful—being so expert in this business that they can throw it 20 or 25 yards and strike a mark the size of a man's head, whilst riding past as swift as their horses will go.

The greater part of the day was occupied in this manner, after which they took up their march towards the river No-wood, on the banks of which stream we encamped for the night. In this vicinity buffalo appeared to be quite numerous and the Indians

*The Crows are probably the best horsemen of all the mountain tribes. They are usually well supplied with horses and have little regard for these useful beasts. They inhabit the wildest and roughest country and are continually going from one side of the Rocky mountains to the other over the roughest roads and most dangerous defiles, which tests to the utmost the animals' endurance. Mr. Hunt says of them, "We had an opportunity to see and admire the equestrian habitudes and address of this hard-riding tribe. They were all mounted, man, woman, and child, for the Crows have horses in abundance, so that no one goes on foot. The children are perfect imps of horseback. Among them was one so young that he could not speak. He was tied on a colt two years old, but managed the reins as if by instinct, and plied the whip with true Indian prodigality. Mr. Hunt inquired the age of this infant jockey, and was answered that 'he had seen two winters'."

The Comanches are no doubt the greatest horsemen of any of the American Indians; they were probably the first to get them after they were introduced into Mexico by the Spaniards. Probably next to the Comanches, the Crows are the most expert, although the former inhabit the plain, the latter the mountains.

killed several this evening. As the prospect of game appeared so good, the Indians determined on remaining here a few days for the purpose of laying in a stock of buffalo robes to trade with Capt. Walker. The Indians would go out in large companies and kill a great number of these animals, when it would be the duty of the women to follow after and gather up the hides, which they would convey to the camp, and dress them ready for market. It is the duty of the squaws to dress the buffalo robes alone, which is done by stretching the hide tight on the ground and there let it dry, when they have a piece of iron or sharp stone, fixed in a stick, making a tool similar to a foot-adze, with which they cut and scrape the fleshy side until it becomes thin and smooth—after this they have a mixture composed of the brains and liver of the animal mixed together, in which they soak the hide a couple of days, when it is taken out and again stretched on the ground, where it is beat and rubbed with a paddle until it becomes perfectly soft and dry.

After catching a good many buffalo and some beaver at this place, we removed towards the point designated to meet Capt. Walker and his men. On the 30th we encamped at the junction of the Bighorn and Wind rivers. Not long after dark our encampment was surprised by a party of about fifty Blackfeet suddenly appearing among our horses for the purpose of stealing them. This created a great uproar in our camp. Every Indian was on his feet and ready for fight in an instant. The enemy was discovered too soon, and had to retreat with the loss of one man, without taking any horses at all. They were followed a great ways across the plain to the mountain, but as the night was very dark they could not be overtaken, and finally escaped. The one who had fallen was a principal chief among the Blackfeet, and had ventured

too near the encampment for the purpose of choosing a valuable horse.

Here we were to have another scene of Indian exultation. On the former occasion, when the 69 Blackfeet had been killed there was too much grief mingled with the joy of the Crows to render it any thing like complete; but now is was quite different,—an enemy had fallen without costing a drop of blood on their part. On the former occasion it was joy only imitated—now it was exultation in reality. It appears natural to these Indians to exult more over the death and scalping of one enemy without the loss of one of their own—than they would to kill fifty of the enemy and loose one of their own.

After those who had gave chase to the Blackfeet returned to camp, this dead Indian was taken in hands. After every one had carefully examined him, he was taken to a tree and there suspended by the neck, when the men commenced shooting at him and the squaws piercing him with sharp sticks. This work was kept up until after midnight, when they commenced dancing and singing, yelling & shouting, which was carried far beyond that of the 21st and 22d Nov. In this manner they spent their time until near ten o'clock, when they prepared to remove up Wind river—which they did after all taking leave of the dead Indian by abusing it in some manner to show their spite.

We travelled up Wind river until the 4th of Dec. when we arrived at the camp of Capt Walker, whom, together with his men we found in good health and spirits. This camp is situated 60 or 70 miles east of the main chain of the Rocky mountains, on the head waters of Wind river, which, after running 150 or 200 miles in an eastern direction, empties into the Bighorn. The Wind river valley, through which this river passes, is one of the most

beautiful formations of nature. It is upwards of 20 miles wide in some places, and is as level as a floor, with the margin of the river evenly ornamented with thriving cotton wood. A great many white people pass the winters in this valley, on account of the abundance of buffalo and other game.

The first night after reaching the camp of my old companions was spent in telling and hearing told the many exploits and adventures which we had severally seen and took part in since our separation. Capt. Walker and his men had passed the time without encountering any hardships, or being disturbed in any way, with the exception of a party of hostile Indians who watched their movements for some time & who at last succeeded in stealing a few of their horses.

The following day the Crow chiefs were made presents of some small articles of merchandize, when we commenced bartering with them for their furs and buffalo robes. As soon as they had sold out their present stock they left us all highly pleased with their success, and commenced hunting for more. As game was very plenty here we determined on spending the winter in this valley, where we occupied our time in hunting and trapping a little ourselves, but deriving our principal profits by trading with the Indians for robes, which they would bring into our camp as fast as they could dress them.

The daily hunting of the Indians, as well as ourselves, had thinned the buffalo pretty well, and driven them across the country onto the Platte river—in consequence of which the Indians are now (1st March, 1835) preparing to leave us and go down to the Yellow-Stone river, which empties into the Missouri, where they intend spending the summer.

The Indians left with us one of their tribe who had

received a stroke of the palsy, or a similar affliction, which had deprived him of speech and of the use of one-half of his body. He was a man of 30 or 35 years of age, appeared to be in good health, but was entirely helpless, one arm and one leg, being entirely numb, or dead, and beginning to decay. He was entirely speechless, and had been in this situation for four years. They told us that this man had been a great warrior, and that the morning after returning from a hard, though successful battle, he was found in his bed dead, as they supposed, and that, when about to bury him in the evening, he gave signs of remaining life—when he was conveyed back to his wigwam, and remained there for two days and nights, when he recovered to the situation in which he was left with us. As he had been such a valuable chief, they did all in their power to restore him the use of his body, and had conveyed him about with them from place to place ever since, but had resolved to do so [no] longer, and therefore left him with us, telling us to do with him as we pleased—if we saw proper to take him with us well and good, if not, we might leave him to be food for the beasts of the forest.

Having concluded our winters hunt and trading with these indians, who have left us, our men are now occupied in digging holes for the secretion of our peltries and merchandize, until we return from our spring's hunt, and when we would be joined by Capt. Bonneville and his company, who was to meet us at the mouth of Papoasia creek in June next. On the 8th I was sent by the Captain to measure the size of the holes that the men were digging and whilst in one of them, taking the dimensions, with three other men, the bank caved in, covering two men entirely, another up to the shoulders, and dislocating my foot. Of the four, I was the only one that was able to get out without assistance—the others

being all seated at the time the accident happened. Help was immediately obtained, and the men extricated as soon as possible, who appeared entirely lifeless, but after rubbing and bleeding them effectually, they recovered, when the men proceeded to extricate the one whom we thought was the least injured, but whom we found to be in the most dangerous situation, as his legs and lower part of his body was completely crushed. This man, (Mr. Laront, of St. Louis, where he left a wife and four children) suffered most severely during the remainder of the day and all night, and died the next morning about sun rise.

The manner of digging these holes is upon a high dry bank, where they sink a round hole like a well, five or six feet, and then dig a chamber under ground, where the merchandize is deposited — after which the *well* part of it is filled up, and the top covered with the natural sod, and all the overpluss earth is carefully scraped up & thrown into the river, or creek, so that nothing may be left on the premises to lead to the discovery of the hidden treasure.

March 10th. To-day we deposited in the cold earth the remains of our lamented companion, Mr. Laront, in the most respectable manner our means would allow, after which we resumed our business of secreting our stores. Our provisions were again growing scarce for which purpose each one is anxious to be on the move. When we first came to this place, we could stand in our encampment almost any morning and shoot down some lazy buffalo that would be lurking in the neighborhood— but now our hunters might scour the valley a whole day and not kill as much as a rabbit.

Having every thing in readiness for removing on the morning of the 12th, Capt. Walker went to the palsied Indian and told him that we were about going and were not

able to take him with us. The poor Indian then, not being able to speak, made imploring signs to us to leave him as much provision as we could spare. This we done with cheerfulness, but it only consisted of the carcase of a wolf, which we placed within reach of him, when he requested that we would fasten the cabin door so as to prevent the entrance of wild beasts.

The wounded, consisting of one with a broken leg, another's back sprained, and myself my foot dislocated, were placed on a litter made of a buffalo skin, with a pole tied to each side of it and fastened between two horses. This was the most painful travelling to me, as well as to the others, that I had ever experienced, — particularly whilst passing over a rough piece of ground.

Our course led in a northern direction after reaching the Bighorn river, which we followed a few days and then crossed over to Tongue river, which stream empties into the Missouri below the mouth of the Yellow stone. Here we decided on hunting and trapping, as beaver signs were quite numerous. The ice had not entirely melted from this stream yet, but there was none left to prevent us from following our favourable pursuit. In this neighborhood, we spent the months of April, May, and part of June, passing from one water course to another, finding plenty of beaver at each place, and some other game. During the whole time we were permitted to follow our business without any disturbance. All the wounded had completely recovered, and were enabled to make a profitable hunt—having visited, in our toilsome occupation, the head waters of the following rivers all of which are the tributaries of the Missouri:—Tongue, Powder, Yellowstone, Little and Big Porcupine, Misscleskell, Priors, Smith's, Gallatin's, Otter, Rose-bud, Clark's and Stinking rivers.*

*Most of these rivers are tributaries of the Yellowstone, the Muscleshell is a branch of the Missouri, and the Stinking River or Stinking Water is a branch of the Bighorn.

About the 10th of June we suspended our trapping and returned to Wind river, where we found Capt. Bonneville and his men waiting for us according to appointment, at the mouth of Popoasia creek.

Here we encamped for a few days, until we could collect our peltries together and make a divide—having sent some of our men to bring our merchandize, &c., from the place where we had deposited it, who succeeded without any difficulty, and stated that no traces of the palsied Indian we had left there could be discovered.—We now set about packing and sorting our furs, &c., and making arrangements for the ensuing year—such as paying off hands hiring them for another term, and apportioning the different companies. Captain Walker, with 59 men, was to continue trapping in this country for one year from this time, and Capt. Bonneville, with the remainder, taking all the peltries we had collected, and which was packed upon horses and mules, was to go to the States, and return in the summer of 1836, with as strong a force as he could collect, and a large supply of merchandize, and meet Capt. Walker in this neighborhood.

On parting this time, many of the men were at a loss to know what to do. Many were anxious to return to the States, but feared to do so, lest the offended law might hold them responsible for misdemeanors committed previous to their embarking in the trapping business, and others could not be persuaded to do so for any price—declaring that a civilized life had no charms for them. Although I intended to return to the mountains again, I was particularly anxious to first visit the States lest I should also forget the blessings of civilized society, and was very thankful when I found myself in Capt. Bonneville's company, on the march towards the rising sun. As we travelled along we killed all the game we could, this being necessary, as pro-

vision is very scarce on the course we intended to pursue between the village of the Pawnee Indians and the white settlements. About the 25th of July we arrived on the Platte river, which we followed down until we arrived at the Pawnee village, situated about 150 miles from where the Platte river empties into the Missouri. After trading with these Indians for some corn, we left them and travelled rapidly every day until we arrived in INDEPENDENCE, (Mo.,) which is the extreme western white settlement, on the 29th of August, 1835*—after being absent four years, four months, and five days.

*From information furnished me by some of Leonard's relatives he returned to his home in Clearfield in the fall of 1835, and remained here about six months, during which time he wrote this narrative. Irving's *Bonneville* was written in 1843.

He had on his return from the mountains $1,100 as the returns of five years' hard work, privations, and dangers. He again returned to the West in the year 1836, and settled at Sibley, Mo. I cannot however say whether he settled here immediately on his return or at a later period. He was however engaged in the Indian trade, and his people inform me that he traded as far as Santa Fé. He died at the above place in 1858, and was evidently a man of some property, which was in the hands of his executors at the time of the breaking out of the Civil war, and they being Southern sympathizers, absconded with a part of the estate. His son, Zenas Leonard, Jr., at present living in Pleasant Hill, Mo., recovered the real estate.

FINIS.

SKETCH OF JOSEPH MEEK

SKETCH OF JOSEPH MEEK

ONE of the companions of Leonard in his trapping and trading expeditions in the Rocky Mountains was the versatile Joe Meek, who has frequently been mentioned in connection with this work. They were together at the battle of Pierre's Hole, he being in the employ of Milton Sublette at this time. The following year he with some companions joined the California expedition under Walker, when it reached Bear River. He gives a very meager and rather unreliable account of this overland voyage, in Mrs. Victor's *River of the West* in which he states that they returned by way of the Moquis villages, in northern Arizona and became involved in a disgraceful affair and murdered some of these half-civilized Indians. This is, no doubt, a mistake, and if not, the party must have separated, and only a portion followed this route.

Meek continued in the mountains until the decline of the fur trade in the early forties, at which time the emigration to Oregon by the overland route had increased to such a degree that thousands started from the western frontier of Missouri, in the spring, as soon as the grass was sufficiently advanced, the journey taking the whole of the summer, and when they arrived in Oregon in the fall they were, as a rule, in a very sad plight, having but little to carry them through the winter, and no crops could be planted or harvested until the following year.

Meek was indeed as poor as the poorest, and no better off than when he went to the mountains many years before, a mere boy. He had an Indian wife and children.

After due consideration he decided to join the emigrants and settle down on a claim in Oregon, as did also many other mountain-men. A neighbor of his was Judge Burnett, afterwards governor of California, who came to Oregon as poor as Meek; this gentleman tells an amusing story of himself which illustrates their poverty. When he arrived in Oregon he was allowed to occupy a school building, which was then only used for church purposes, and in payment of rent, was required to have the building in a condition to hold services when desired. His wardrobe, as may be imagined, was not very extensive, in fact, he went without shoes much of the time, but on these church occasions felt in duty bound to appear in his best; he found one shoe but was unable to find its mate; he thought, however, that by hiding his other foot under the seat, and exposing the one with the shoe, he would present a respectable appearance. Everything went well until about the middle of the sermon, when the minister, becoming thirsty, requested Judge Burnett to get him a glass of water; he said there was no refusing such a modest request, and hobbled to do the errand with but one shoe on, much to the amusement of the congregation. Meek was a hale fellow, good-natured and jovial, remarkably good at telling stories, which he could stretch to any magnitude, and not particularly fond of work, much to the disgust of good Doctor McLaughlin. Settlers were entitled to six hundred and forty acres of land if they had families; and if they had the facilities and inclination to work the same, the extremely rich soil soon returned them a competence.

They organized a provisional government, and Joe Meek, the future envoy, was elected marshal; his principal duty was to collect the taxes, which were paid in wheat at sixty cents a bushel, it being the legal tender of the country. He resigned this office, and was elected to the

legislature, about 1846; was re-elected the following year, when he swam out to a vessel lying at the mouth of the Willamette, to get liquor to treat his constituents.

About this time the troublesome northwest boundary was settled, and Oregon became a part of the United States. Shortly after an Indian uprising, known as the "Cayuse War," occurred, and Doctor Whitman and his family, with others about the mission at Waiilatpu, were massacred. It was necessary under these circumstances to inform the United States government of the condition of affairs in Oregon at once, and ask for assistance. In view of this necessity it was resolved in the legislature to send a messenger to carry the intelligence of the massacre to Governor Mason in California, and through him to the commander of the United States squadron in the Pacific that a vessel of war might be sent into the Columbia River, and arms and ammunition borrowed for the present emergency, from the nearest arsenal.

For this duty was chosen Jesse Applegate, Esq., a gentleman who combined in his character and person the ability of the statesman with the sagacity and strength of the pioneer. Mr. Applegate with a party of brave men set out in midwinter to cross the mountains into California, but such was the depth of the snow they encountered that traveling became impossible, even after abandoning their horses, and they were compelled to return.

The messenger elected to proceed to the United States was Joseph L. Meek, whose Rocky Mountain experience eminently fitted him to encounter the dangers of such a winter journey, and whose manliness, firmness, and ready wit stood him instead of statesmanship. On December 17, 1847, Meek resigned his seat in the House in order to prepare for the discharge of his duty as messenger to the United States. On January 4, armed with

his credentials from the Oregon legislature, and bearing despatches from that body and the Governor to the President, he set out on the long and perilous journey, having for traveling companions Mr. John Owens and Mr. George Ebbarts, the latter having formerly been a mountain-man like himself. At the Dalles they found the first regiment of Oregon riflemen, under Major Lee, of the newly created army of Oregon. From the reports which the Dalles Indians brought in of the hostility of the Indians beyond the Des Chutes River it was thought best not to proceed before the arrival of the remainder of the army, when all the forces would proceed at once to Waiilatpu. Owing to various delays, the army, consisting of about five hundred men, under Colonel Gilliam, did not reach the Dalles until late in January, when the troops proceeded at once to the seat of war. Arriving at Waiilatpu, the friends and acquaintances of Doctor Whitman were shocked to find that the remains of the victims were still unburied, although a little earth had been thrown over them. Meek, to whom Mrs. Whitman had seemed all that was noble and captivating, ever since his meeting with her in the train of the fur-trader, on their way out, had the melancholy satisfaction of bestowing, with others, the last sad rite of burial upon such portions of her once fair person as murderer and the wolves had not destroyed. Some tresses of golden hair were severed from the brow so terribly disfigured, to be given to her friends in the Willamette Valley as a last and only memorial. Among the state documents at Salem, Oregon, may still be seen one of these relics of the Waiilatpu tragedy. Not only had Meek to discover and inter the remains of the Whitmans, but also of his little girl, who was being educated at the mission, with a daughter of his former leader, Bridger.

This sad duty performed, he immediately set out, es-

corted by a company of one hundred men under Adjutant Wilcox, who accompanied him as far as the foot of the Blue Mountains. Here the companies separated, and Meek went on his way to Washington. Meek's party now consisted of himself, Ebbarts, Owens, and four men, who, desirous of returning to the states, took this opportunity. However, as the snow proved to be very deep on the Blue Mountains, and the cold severe, two of these four volunteers became discouraged and concluded to remain at Fort Boisé, then a small trading-post of the Hudson Bay Company.

In order to avoid trouble with the Indians he might meet on the western side of the Rocky Mountains, Meek had adopted the red belt and Canadian cap of the employes of the Hudson Bay Company; and to this precaution was due the fact that he passed safely through the country now all raging with hostility caught from the Cayuses. About three days' travel beyond Fort Boisé, the party met a village of Bannock Indians, who at once made warlike demonstrations, but on seeing Meek's costume, and receiving an invitation to hold a "talk," desisted, and received the travelers in a friendly manner. Meek informed the chief, with all the gravity which had won for him the name of "Shiamshuspusia" among the Crows in former years, that he was going on the business of the Hudson Bay Company to Fort Hall; and that Thomas McKay was a day's march behind with a large trading-party, and plenty of goods. On the receipt of this good news, the chief ordered the braves to fall back, and permit the party to pass. Yet, fearing the deception might be discovered, they thought it prudent to travel day and night until they reached Fort Hall.

At this post of the Hudson Bay Company, in charge of Mr. Grant, they were kindly received, and stopped for a

few hours of rest. Mr. Grant being absent, his wife provided liberally for the refreshment of the party, who were glad to find themselves even for a short interval under a roof, beside a fire, and partaking of freshly cooked food. But they permitted themselves no unnecessary delay. Before night, they were once more on their way, though snow had now commenced to fall afresh, rendering traveling very difficult. For two days they struggled on, their horses floundering in the soft drifts, until further progress in this manner became impossible. The only alternative was to abandon their horses and proceed on snow-shoes, which were readily constructed of willow sticks. Taking only a blanket and their rifles, and leaving the animals to find their way back to Fort Hall, the little party pushed on.

Meek was now on familiar ground, and the old mountain spirit which had once enabled him to endure hunger, cold, and fatigue without murmuring possessed him now. It was not without a certain sense of enjoyment that he found himself reduced to the necessity of shooting a couple of pole-cats to furnish a supper for himself and party. How long the enjoyment of feeling want would have lasted is uncertain, but probably only long enough to whet the appetite for plenty. To such a point had the appetites of all the party been whetted, when, after several days of scarcity and toil, followed by nights of emptiness and cold, Meek had the agreeable surprise of falling in with an old mountain comrade on the identical ground of many former adventures, the head-waters of Bear River. This man, whom Meek was delighted to meet, was Peg-leg Smith, one of the most famous of many well-known mountain-men; he received this name by having lost his leg when fighting with the Crows, and had a wooden leg which he had a way of unstrapping when in a fight, and it proved

a weapon not to be despised. He was engaged in herding cattle in the valley of Thomas Fork, where the tall grass was not quite buried under snow, and had with him a party of ten men. Meek was as cordially received by his former comrade as the unbounded hospitality of mountain manners rendered it certain he would be. A fat cow was immediately sacrificed, which, though not buffalo meat, as in former times it would have been, was very good beef, and furnished a luxurious repast to the pole-cat eaters of the last few days.

Smith thought to celebrate the occasion by a grand entertainment. Accordingly, after a great deal of roast beef had been disposed of, a dance was called for, in which white men and Indian women joined with far more mirth and jollity than grace or ceremony. Thus passed some hours of the night, the bearer of despatches seizing, in true mountain style, the passing moments of pleasure, so long as it did not interfere with the punctilious discharge of his duty. And to the honor of our hero be it said, nothing was ever allowed to interfere with that. Refreshed and provided with rations for a couple of days, the party started on again the next morning, still on snow-shoes, and traveled up Bear River to the head-waters of Green River, crossing from the Muddy Fork over to Fort Bridger, where they arrived very much fatigued, but quite well, after a little more than three days' travel.

Here it was Meek's good fortune to again meet with his former leader, Bridger, to whom he related what had befallen him since turning pioneer. The meeting was joyful on both sides, clouded only by the remembrance of what had brought it about, and the reflection that both had personal wrongs to avenge in bringing about the punishment of the Cayuse murderers. Once more Meek's party were generously fed and furnished with such provisions as they

could carry about their persons. In addition to this, Bridger presented them with four good mules, by which means the travelers were mounted four at a time, while the fifth took exercise on foot; so that by riding and walking, in turns, they were enabled to get on very well as far as the South Pass. Here for some distance the snow was very deep, and two of their mules were lost in it. Their course lay down the Sweetwater River, past many familiar hunting and camping grounds, to the Platte River. Owing to the deep snows, game was very scarce, and a long day of toil was frequently closed by a supperless sleep under shelter of some rock or bank, with only a blanket for covering. At Red Buttes they were so fortunate as to find and kill a single buffalo, which, separated from a distant herd, was left by Providence in the path of the famishing travelers.

On reaching the Platte River they found the traveling improved, as well as the supply of game, and proceeded with less difficulty as far as Fort Laramie, a trading-post in charge of a French trader named Papillion. Fresh mules were obtained, and the little party treated in the most hospitable manner. In parting from his entertainer, Meek was favored with this brief counsel: "There is a village of Sioux, of about six hundred lodges, a hundred miles from here. Your course will bring you to it. Look out for yourself, and don't make a Grey muss of it." The latter clause referred to the affair of 1837, when the Sioux had killed the Indian escort of Mr. Grey. When the party arrived at Ash Hollow, which they meant to have passed in the night, on account of the Sioux village, the snow was again falling so thickly that the party had not perceived their nearness to the village until they were fairly in the midst of it. It was now no safer to retreat than to proceed; and after a moment's consultation, the word was

given to keep on. In truth, Meek thought it doubtful whether the Sioux would trouble themselves to come out in such a tempest, and if they did so, the blinding snowfall was rather in his favor. Thus reasoning, he was forcing his mule through the drifts as rapidly as the poor worried animal could make its way, when a head was protruded from a lodge door, and "Hello, Major," greeting his ear in an accent not altogether English. On being thus accosted, the party came to a halt, and Meek was invited to enter the lodge, with his friends. His host on this occasion was a French trader named Le Bean, who, after offering the hospitalities of the lodge, and learning who were his guests, offered to accompany the party a few miles on its way. This he did, saying by way of explanation of this act of courtesy, "The Sioux are a bad people; I thought it best to see you safely out of the village." Receiving the thanks of the travelers, he turned back at nightfall, and they continued on all night without stopping to camp, going some distance south of their course before turning east again, in order to avoid any possible pursuits.

Without further adventures, and by dint of almost constant travel, the party safely arrived at St. Joseph, Mo., in a little over two months, from Portland, Oregon. Soon afterwards, when the circumstances of this journey became known, a steamboat built for the Missouri River trade was christened the "Joseph L. Meek," and bore for a motto, on her pilot-house, "The quickest trip yet," in reference both to Meek's overland journey and her own steaming qualities. As Meek approached the settlements, and knew that he must soon be thrown into the society of the highest officials, and be subjected to ordeals which he dreaded far more than Indian fighting, or even traveling across a continent of snow, the subject of how he was to behave in these new and trying positions very frequently occurred to

him. He, an uneducated man, trained to mountain life and manners, without money, or even clothes, with nothing to depend on but the importance of his mission and his own mother-wit, felt far more keenly than his careless appearance would suggest, the difficulties and awkwardness of his position. "I thought a great deal about it," confessed Col. Joseph L. Meek later, "and I finally concluded that as I had never tried to act like anybody but myself, I would not make myself a fool by beginning to ape other folks now. So I said, 'Joe Meek you always have been, and Joe Meek you shall remain; go ahead, Joe Meek.' "

In fact, it would have been rather difficult putting on fine gentleman-like airs, in that old worn-out hunting suit of his, and with not a dollar to bless himself. On the contrary, it needed just the devil-may-care temper which naturally belonged to our hero, to carry him through the remainder of his journey to Washington. To be hungry, ill-clad, dirty, and penniless, is sufficient in itself for the subduing of most spirits; how it affected the temper of the messenger from Oregon we shall now learn. When the weary little party arrived in St. Joseph, they repaired to a hotel, and Meek requested that a meal should be served to all, but frankly confessed that they had no money to pay. The landlord, however, declined furnishing guests of his style upon such terms, and our travelers were forced to go into camp below the town. Meek now bethought himself of his letters of introduction. It chanced that he had one from two young men among the Oregon volunteers,to their father in St. Joseph. Stopping a negro who was passing his camp, he inquired whether such a gentleman was known to him; and on learning that he was, had him deliver the letter from the sons. This movement proved successful. In a short space of time the gentleman presented himself, and learning the situation of the party, provided

generously for their present wants, and promised any assistance which might be required in future. Meek, however, chose to accept only that which was imperatively needed, namely, something to eat, and transportation to some point on the river where he could take a steamer for St. Louis. A portion of his party chose to remain in St. Joseph, and a portion accompanied him as far as Independence, whither this same St. Joseph gentleman conveyed them in a carriage. While Meek was stopping at Independence, he was recognized by a sister, whom he had not seen for nineteen years; who, marrying and emigrating from Virginia, had settled on the frontier of Missouri. But he gave himself no time for family reunion and gossip. A steamboat that had been frozen up in the ice all winter, was just about starting for St. Louis, and on board of this he went, with an introduction to the captain, which secured for him every privilege the boat afforded, together with the kindest attention of its officers. When the steamer arrived at St. Louis, by one of those fortunate circumstances so common in our hero's career, he was met at the landing by Campbell, a Rocky Mountain trader who had formerly belonged to the St. Louis Company. This meeting relieved him of any care about his night's entertainment in St. Louis, and it also had another effect, that of relieving him of any further care about the remainder of his journey; for, after hearing Meek's story of the position of affairs in Oregon and his errand to the United States, Campbell had given the same to the newspaper reporters, and Meek, like Byron, awoke next morning to find himself famous.

Having telegraphed to Washington, and received the president's order to come on, the previous evening, our hero wended his way to the levee the morning after his arrival in St. Louis. There were two steamers lying side

by side, both up for Pittsburg, with runners for each, striving to out-do each other in securing passengers. A bright thought occurred to the moneyless envoy—he would earn his passage. Walking on board one of the boats, which bore the name of the "Declaration," himself a figure which attracted all eyes by his size and outlandish dress, he mounted to the hurricane deck and began to harangue the crowd upon the levee, in the voice of a Stentor: "This way, gentlemen, if you please. Come right on board the 'Declaration.' I am the man from Oregon, with despatches to the president of these United States, that you all read about in this morning's paper. Come on board, ladies and gentlemen, if you want to hear the news from Oregon. I have just come across the plains, two months from the Columbia River, where the Injuns are killing your missionaries. Those passengers who come aboard the 'Declaration' shall hear all about it before they get to Pittsburg. Don't stop thar, looking at my old wolfskin cap, but just come aboard, and hear what I've got to tell." The novelty of this sort of solicitation operated capitally. Many persons crowded on board the "Declaration" only to get a closer look at this picturesque personage who invited them, and many more because they were really interested to know the news from the far-off young territory which had fallen into trouble. So it chanced that the "Declaration" was inconveniently crowded on this particular morning. After the boat had got under way, the captain approached his roughest looking cabin passenger and inquired in a low tone of voice if he was really and truly the messenger from Oregon. "Thar's what I've got to show for it;" answered Meek, producing his papers. "Well, all I have to say is, Mr. Meek, that you are the best runner this boat ever had; and you are welcome to your passage ticket, and anything you desire besides." Finding that this

bright thought had succeeded so well, Meek's spirits rose with the occasion, and the passengers had no reason to complain that he had not kept his word. Before he reached Wheeling his popularity was immense, notwithstanding the condition of his wardrobe. On the morning of his arrival in Wheeling it happened that the stage which then carried passengers to Cumberland, where they took the train for Washington, had already departed. Elated by his previous good fortune our ragged hero resolved not to be delayed by so trivial a circumstance; but walking pompously into the stage office inquired, with an air which must have smacked strongly of the mock-heroic, if he, "could have a stage for Cumberland?" The nicely-dressed, dignified, elderly gentleman who managed the business of the office, regarded the man who proffered this modest request for a moment in motionless silence, then slowly raising the spectacles over his eyes to a position on his forehead, finished his survey with unassisted vision. Somewhat impressed by the manner in which Meek bore this scrutiny, he ended by demanding, "Who are you?" Amused by the absurdity of the tableau they were enacting, Meek straightened himself up to his six feet two, and replied with an air of superb self-assurance: "I am Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the Republic of Oregon to the Court of the United States." After a pause in which the old gentleman seemed to be recovering from some great surprise, he requested to see the credentials of this extraordinary envoy. Still more surprised he seemed on discovering for himself that the personage before him was really a messenger from Oregon to the government of the United States. But the effect was magical. In a moment the bell-rope was pulled, and in an incredibly short space of time a coach stood at the door ready to convey the waiting messenger on his way

to Washington. In the meantime in a conversation with the stage agent, Meek had explained more fully the circumstances of his mission, and the agent had become much interested. On parting, Meek received a ticket to the relay house, with many expressions of regret from the agent that he could ticket him no farther. "But it is all the same," said he; "you are sure to go through." "Or run a train off the track," rejoined Meek, as he was bowed out of the office.

It happened that there were some other passengers waiting to take the first stage, and they crowded into this one, glad for the unexpected opportunity, but wondering at the queer-looking passenger to whom the agent was so polite. This scarcely concealed curiosity was all that was needed to stimulate the mad-cap spirits of our so far "conquering hero." Putting his head out of the window just at the moment of starting, he electrified everybody, horses included, by the utterance of a war-whoop and yell that would have done credit to a wild Comanche. Satisfied with the speed to which this demoniac noise had excited the driver's prancing steeds, he ensconced himself in his corner of the coach and quietly waited for his fellow passengers to recover from their stunned sensations. When their complete recovery had been effected, there followed the usual questioning and explanations, which ended in the inevitable lionizing that was so much to the taste of this sensational individual. On the cars at Cumberland, and at the eating-houses, the messenger from Oregon kept up his sensational character, indulging in alternate fits of mountain manners, and again assuming a disproportionate amount of grandeur; but in either view proving himself very amusing. By the time the train reached the relay house, many of the passengers had become acquainted with Meek, and were prepared to un-

derstand and enjoy each new phase of his many-sided comicality. The ticket with which the stage agent presented him, deadheaded him only to this point. Here again he must make his poverty a jest, and joke himself through to Washington.

Accordingly, when the conductor came through the car in which he, with seevral of his new acquaintances were sitting, demanding tickets, he was obliged to tap his blanketed passenger on the shoulder to attract his attention to the "Ticket, sir." "Ha ko any me ca, hanch?" said Meek, starting up and addressing him in the Snake tongue. "Ticket, sir," repeated the conductor, staring. "Ka hum pa, hanch?" returned Meek, assuming a look which indicated that English was as puzzling to him, as Snake to the other people. Finding that his time would be wasted on this singular passenger, the conductor went on through the train; returning after a time with a fresh demand for his ticket. But Meek sustained his character admirably, and it was only through the excessive amusement of the passengers that the conductor suspected that he was being made the subject of a practical joke. At this stage of affairs it was privately explained to him, who and what his waggish customer was, and tickets were no more mentioned during the journey. On the arrival of the train at Washington, the heart of our hero became for a brief moment of time "very little." He felt that the importance of his mission demanded some dignity of appearance, some conformity to established rules and precedents. But of the latter he knew absolutely nothing; and concerning the former, he realized the absurdity of a dignitary clothed in blankets and a wolfskin cap. "Joe Meek I must remain," said he to himself, as he stepped out of the train, and glanced along the platform at the crowd of porters with the names of their hotels on their hat-bands. Learning

from inquiry that Coleman's was the most fashionable place, he decided that to Coleman's he would go, judging correctly that it was best to show no littleness of heart even in the matter of hotels.

When Meek arrived at Coleman's it was the dinner hour, and following the crowd to the dining-saloon, he took the first seat he came to, not without being very much stared at. He had taken his cue and the staring was not unexpected, consequently not so embarrassing as it might otherwise have been. A bill of fare was laid beside his plate. Turning to the colored waiter who placed it there, he startled him first by inquiring in a low growling voice—"What's that, boy?" "Bill of fare, sah," replied the boy, who recognized the Southerner in the use of that one word. "Read," growled Meek again, "the people in my country can't read." Though taken by surprise, the waiter, politely obedient, proceeded to enumerate the courses on the bill of fare, when it came to game—"Stop thar, boy,"commanded Meek,"what kind of game?" "Small game, sah." "Fetch me a piece of antelope," leaning back in his chair with a look of satisfaction on his face. "Got none of that, sah; don't know what that ar' sah." "Don't know," with a look of pretended surprise. "In my country antelope and deer ar' small game; bear and buffalo ar' large game. I reckon if you haven't got one, you haven't got the other. In that case you may fetch me some beef." The waiter disappeared grinning, and soon returned with the customary thin and small cut, which Meek eyed at first contemptuously, and then accepting it in the light of a sample swallowed it at two mouthfuls, returning the plate to the waiter with an approving smile, and saying loud enough to be overheard by a score of people, "Boy, that will do. Fetch me about four pounds of the same kind."

By this time the blanketed beef-eater was the recipi-

ent of general attention, and the "boy" who served him comprehending with that quickness which distinguishes servants, that he had no ordinary backwoodsman to deal with, was all the time on the alert to make himself useful. People stared, then smiled, then asked each other, who is it? loud enough for the stranger to hear. Meek looked neither to the right nor to the left, pretending not to hear the whispering. When he had finished his beef, he again addressed himself to the attentive "boy." "That's better meat than the old mule I eat in the mountains." Upon this remark the whispering became more general, and louder, and smiles more frequent. "What have you got to drink, boy?" continued Meek, still unconscious. "Isn't there a sort of wine called—some kind of pain?" "Champagne, sah?" "That's the stuff, I reckon; bring me some." While Meek was drinking his champagne, with an occasional aside to his faithful attendant, people laughed and wondered, "who the devil he was." At length having finished his wine, and overhearing many open inquiries as to his identity, the hero of many bear-fights slowly arose, and addressing the company through the beforementioned "boy," said: "You want to know who I am?" "If you please, sah; yes, if you please, sah, for the sake of these gentlemen present," replied the "boy," answering for the company. "Wall then," proclaimed Meek with a grandiloquent air quite at variance with his blanket coat and unkempt hair, yet which displayed his fine person to advantage, "I am Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the Republic of Oregon to the Court of the United States." With that he turned and strode from the room. He had not proceeded far, however, before he was overtaken by a party of gentlemen in pursuit. Senator Underwood of Kentucky immediately introduced himself, calling the envoy by name, for the despatch from

St. Louis had prepared the president and the senate for Meek's appearance in Washington, though it had not advised them of his style of dress and address. Other gentlemen were introduced, and questions followed questions in rapid succession. When curiosity was somewhat abated, Meek expressed a wish to see the president without delay. To Underwood's question as to whether he did not wish to make his toilet before visiting the White House, his reply was, "Business first, and toilet afterwards." "But," said Underwood, "even, your business can wait long enough for that." "No, that's your mistake, Senator, and I'll tell you why; I can't dress, for two reasons—both good ones. I've not got a cent of money, nor a second suit of clothes." The generous Kentuckian offered to remove the first of the objections on the spot, but Meek declined. "I'll see the president first, and hear what he has to say about my mission." Then calling a coach from the stand, he sprang into it, answering the driver's question of where he would be taken, with another inquiry: "Whar should a man of my style want to go? To the White House, of course," and so was driven away amid the general laughter of the gentlemen present, in the portico at Coleman's, who had rather doubted his intention to pay his respects to the president in his dirty blankets. He was admitted to the presidential mansion by a mulatto of about his own age, with whom he remembered playing when a lad, for it must be remembered that the Meeks and Polks were related, and this servant had grown up in the family. On inquiring to see the president, he was directed to the office of the private secretary, Knox Walker, also a relative of Meek, on his mother's side. On entering he found the room filled with gentlemen waiting to see the president. The secretary sat reading a paper, over the top of which he glanced but once at the new-comer, to ask

him to be seated. But Meek was not in a humor for sitting, and said, "I should like to see the president immediately. Just tell him, if you please, that there is a gentleman from Oregon waiting to see him on very important business." At the word Oregon, the secretary sprang up, dashed his paper to the floor, and crying out "Uncle Joe" came forward with both hands extended to greet his long lost relative.

"Take care, Knox, don't come too close," said Meek, stepping back, "I'm ragged, dirty, and lousy." But Walker seized his cousin's hand, without seeming fear of the consequences, and for a few moments there was an animated exchange of questions and answers, which Meek at last interrupted to repeat his request to be admitted to the president without delay. When once the secretary got away he soon returned with a request from the president for the appearance of the Oregon messenger, all other visitors being dismissed for that day. Polk's reception proved as cordial as Walker's had been. He seized the hand of his newly found relative, and welcomed him in his own name, as well as that of messenger from the distant, much loved, and long neglected Oregon. The interview lasted for a couple of hours. Oregon and family affairs were talked over together; the president promising to do all for Oregon that he could. After this the president insisted on sending for Mrs. Polk and Mrs. Walker to make his acquaintance. "When I heard the silks rustling in the passage, I felt more frightened than if a hundred Blackfeet had whooped in my ear. A mist came over my eyes, and when Mrs. Polk spoke to me I could think of nothing to say in return."

But Meek was not the sort of man to be long in getting used to a situation, however novel or difficult. In a very short time he was *au fait* in the customs of the capi-

tal. His perfect frankness led people to laugh at his errors as eccentricities; his good looks and natural *bonhomie* procured him plenty of admirers; while his position at the White House caused him to be envied and lionized at once. On the day following his arrival the president sent a message to congress accompanied by the memorial from the Oregon legislature and other documents appertaining to the Oregon cause. Meek was introduced to Benton, Oregon's indefatigable friend, and received from him the kindest treatment; also to Dallas, president of the senate; Douglas, Fremont, Gen. Houston, and all the men who had identified themselves with the interests of the West.

In the meantime our hero was making the most of his opportunities, attending dinners and champagne suppers, besides giving an occasional one of the latter. At the presidential levees he made himself agreeable to witty and distinguished ladies, answering innumerable questions about Oregon and Indians, on the latter subject, where he had an interested and confiding audience, he was probably at his best, and some of his hearers no doubt were very nervous on going to bed, and often during the night felt to see if the brain covering was still intact.

Meek found his old comrade, Kit Carson, in Washington, staying with Fremont at the home of Senator Benton. Carson on leaving the mountains was as poor as the average mountain-man, and had no resources at this time except the pay furnished by Fremont for his services as guide and explorer in the California and Oregon expeditions, and in these discoveries Carson as much as Fremont deserves the name of pathfinder.

So long as Meek's purse was supplied, as it generally was, Carson could borrow from him, but one being quite as careless of money as the other, they were sometimes

both out of pocket at the same time. In which case the conversation was likely to be as follows:

Carson: Meek, let me have some money, can't you?
Meek: I haven't got any money, Kit.
Carson: Go and get some.
Meek: —— it, whar am I to get money from?
Carson: Try the "contingent fund," can't you?

Shortly after the arrival of Meek congress appropriated ten thousand dollars, to be expended under the direction of the president, in payment for services and expenses of such persons as had been engaged by the provisional government of Oregon in conveying communications to and from the United States; and for purchase of presents for such Indian tribes as the peace and quiet of the country required. Of this money Meek received seven thousand four hundred dollars, Mr. Thornton, who came by water from Oregon, two thousand six hundred, and the Indian tribes the whole of the remainder. His old employer, Wilkes, who was ill in Washington, sent for him to come and tell "some of those Oregon lies" for his amusement, and Meek, to humor him, stretched some of his good stories to the most wonderful dimensions. On one of his visits, Polk, detecting the restless state of his mind, asked laughingly, "Well, Meek, what do you want now?" "I want to be franked." "How long will five hundred dollars last you?" "About as many days as there ar' hundreds, I reckon." "You are shockingly extravagant, Meek. Where do you think all this money is to come from?" "It is not my business to know, Mr. President, but it is the business of these United States to pay the expenses of the messenger from Oregon, isn't it?" The following night he gave a champagne supper. Washington manners were in some respects too much like mountain manners for five hundred dollars to go a great ways.

On the fourth of July, Polk laid the corner-stone of the National Monument, the address was delivered by Winthrop, the military display, and the fireworks in the evening being unusually fine. In the procession General Scott and staff rode on one side of the President's carriage, Col. May and Meek on the other, Meek making a great display of horsemanship, in which as a mountain-man he excelled.

The bill before Congress, for the extension of the Government over that territory, was objected to by the southern members, as they were against more free soil. The President was anxious that the bill should pass, Benton of Missouri also, Butler of South Carolina, opposed it. Numerous were the skirmishes which these two Senators had over the Oregon question; and a duel would, in one instance, have resulted, had not the arrest of the parties put a termination to the affair.

The close of the session was at hand, Congress was to adjourn at noon Monday, August 14. At ten o'clock Saturday night, no adjournment having prevailed, Senator Foote, of Mississippi, arose and commenced to speak in a manner most dull and drawling; he intended to occupy the floor until the hour of adjournment on Monday. Commencing at the creation of Adam and Eve, he gave the Bible story; the fall of man; the history of the children of Israel; the stories of the prophets; ecclesiastical history, thus continuing to drawl through the time hour after hour. Sleepy senators betook themselves to the cloak-rooms to lunch, to drink, to talk to the waiting ones, and to sleep. Thus the night passed and the Sabbath morning's sun arose, and still Foote was in the midst of his Bible disquisition. At length, two hours after sunrise, a consultation was held between Butler, Mason, Calhoun, Davis, and Foote, which resulted in the announcement that no fur-

ther opposition would be offered to taking the vote upon the final passage of the Oregon bill. A vote was then taken, and the bill passed.

The long suspense was at last ended and Meek prepared to return to Oregon, his life-long habits of unrestrained freedom began to revolt against the conventionalities in Washington, the novelty of which had long since disappeared. In appointing officers for the new territory he was made United States Marshal; no office could have suited him better. The governorship was offered to Mr. Shields who declined, General Joseph Lane of Indiana was then appointed and his commission given to Meek to deliver to him in the shortest time possible, and then to proceed at once to Oregon. The President's last words were, "Good bless you, Meek; tell Lane to have a territorial government organized during my administration."

While in St. Louis young Lane who accompanied his father, wanted a knife, and as they met a Jew on the street with a large number he began to beat down the price, whereupon Meek made an offer for the whole lot in order to prevent Lane from getting one at any price. Not satisfied with this investment, he next made a purchase of three whole pieces of silk, at one dollar and fifty cents a yard. At this stage of the transaction Gen. Lane interfered sufficiently to inquire "what he expected to do with that stuff?" "Can't tell," answered Meek, "but I reckon it is worth the money." "Better save your money," said the more prudent Lane.

At St. Louis they met Lieutenant Hawkins, who was to command the escort of twenty-five riflemen, also Doctor Hayden, surgeon of the company. On the tenth of September the government of Oregon was on its way, taking the southern route over the Sante Fé trail, to the latter place, thence down the Gila to Fort Yuma, Arizona,

and San Pedro Bay in California, where they expected to find a vessel to carry them the remainder of the journey. The party which on leaving Leavenworth six months before numbered fifty-five, now numbered only seven. This was due to the many desertions on account of the gold excitement which had just broken out in California. They arrived weary, dusty, foot-sore, famished, and suffering, at Williams's ranch on the Santa Anna River, Cal., where they were kindly received, and their wants ministered to.

At this place our hero developed, in addition to his various accomplishments, a talent for speculation. While overhauling his baggage, the knives and the silk which had been purchased of the peddler in St. Louis were brought to light; no sooner did the senoras catch a glimpse of the shining fabrics than they went into raptures over them, after the fashion of their sex, and to the expense of their spouse. Seeing the state of mind to which these raptures, if unheeded, were likely to reduce the ladies of his house, Mr. Williams approached Meek delicately on the subject of purchase. But Meek, in the first flush of speculative shrewdness declared that he had bought the goods for his own wife, and he could not find it in his heart to sell them. However, as the senoras were likely to prove inconsolable, Mr. Williams again mentioned the desire of his family to be clad in silk, and the great difficulty, nay, impossibility, of obtaining the much coveted fabric in that part of the world, and accompanied his remarks with an offer of ten dollars a yard for the lot. At this magnificent offer our hero affected to be overcome by regard for the feelings of the senoras, and consented to sell his dollar and a half silk at ten dollars a yard. In the same manner, finding that knives were a desirable article in that country, very much wanted by miners and others, he sold out his few dozen at

an ounce of gold dust each, netting the convenient little profit of about five hundred dollars.

When Gen. Lane was informed of the transaction, and reminded of his objection to the original purchase, he laughed heartily. "Well, Meek," he said, "you were drunk when you bought them, and by —— I think you must have been drunk when you sold them; but drunk or sober, I will own that you can beat me at a bargain."

On the second of March the Oregon government arrived at its destination, and on the third put into operation the Territorial Government, one day before the expiration of President Polk's term of office.

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